

fac

4-

Class 234.8.

Book Ev. 1.

University of Chicago Library

GIVEN BY

Besides the main topic this book also treats of

Subject No.

On page

Subject No.

On page





BT 767
E9

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1837, by
JOHN S. TAYLOR, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court
of the United States, for the Southern District of New-
York.

CONTENTS.

Introductory Preface. - - - -	5
-------------------------------	---

CHAPTER I.

The Nature, Necessity, and Author of Holiness. - - - - -	27
---	----

CHAPTER II.

The Incipient Principle of Holiness, as developed in Regeneration. - - -	60
---	----

CHAPTER III.

The Operation of the Spirit of Holiness, as viewed, negatively, in the Mortification of Sin. - - - - -	112
--	-----

CHAPTER IV.

The Operation of the Spirit of Holiness, as viewed, positively, in the Work of Sanc- tification. - - - - -	173
--	-----

1899

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
AMERICAN EDITION.

IT is with peculiar satisfaction, and with no ordinary anticipations of its reception, that the writer introduces this valuable little Treatise to the American Churches, clad in an American dress. With its respected author, it is his privilege to be on terms of long and endeared intimacy. And the recollection of his public ministrations—ministrations that have been to him channels of great spiritual instruction—together with the remembrance of hours of hallowed intercourse, wiled away in the parlour and in the study, will, to the latest period of life, form green and sunny spots in the review of the past, and afford material for grateful thanksgiving to God. And yet, if the writer is not greatly deceived in the purity of his motive, mere personal regard for the author,

fervent as it is, forms with him no justifying plea in countenancing the publication of the volume. With a Christian, and intelligent public, he is aware that such an apology, amiable as is the light in which it might be viewed, would weigh but little in securing their favourable regard for a publication possessing no intrinsic merit of its own, while so many valuable works, thrown daily from the press, demand, and justly too, the patronage of the learned and the good. But an anxious desire that many might benefit from a Treatise, the tendency of which will be—if read with the attending blessing of Him on whose office it expatiates—to strengthen the tone of personal piety; to elevate the standard of holiness in the Church; to deepen a believer's views of his sinfulness; to excite in him an ardent thirst for its mortification; and to develope the much-forgotten and slighted agency of the Spirit of Holiness in commencing and carrying forward the work of sanctification; is the sole motive that has urged its wider circulation, and which induces the writer earnestly to bespeak, on its behalf, the prayerful perusal of every professor of the Gospel of Christ.

To an individual accustomed closely to scrutinize the 'signs of the times,' the work of Mr.

Evans must appear peculiarly adapted to the pressing exigencies of the age. It will be acknowledged, the writer believes, by all Christians, that never has the Protestant Church assumed an attitude of such moral sublimity as that in which she now reposes. Her efforts to carry out, to its widest extent, the dying command of her Lord, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature:" the vast and complicated machinery to effect this, she has devised and put in motion; the facilities afforded by the varying dispensations of Providence; the Scriptures already translated into well nigh two hundred languages; commerce opening communications with other, distant, and hitherto inaccessible nations; the offerings daily laid at her feet of the persons and the substance of men; and the almost miraculous success which, to the present, has crowned her far-reaching labours, all tend to place her on a pedestal of wondrous and fearful height, the gaze and the astonishment of all people. It becomes then a question of deepening interest—what can sustain her in her giddy elevation? What will continue to impart nerve to her arm; keenness to her vision; and firmness to her foothold? Will the might of the mighty, the

wisdom of the wise, the wealth of the wealthy ? If this be the secret of her prowess, and this the security of her position, then will she fall, and the record of her self-sufficiency and presumption, will, to other ages, be like Ezekiel's roll, " written within and without, in lamentations, and mourning and wo." No ; the grand secret of the Church's power, and the grand secret of the Church's security, is *in the deep-toned piety of her individual members*. As this declines, she is shorn of her glory, and her strength. As this is maintained and increased, she emphatically goes forth, " fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." We ask not what names are written on her scroll ; we inquire not, ' who of the rulers have believed ; ' we search not into what clime she has borne her victorious arms ; we enter into no arithmetical investigation of the amount of contributions poured into her treasury : Perish every such wordly calculation ! The only questions worthy of a moment's consideration with us, are—what is the character of her piety, and what is the standard of her holiness ? Is she toying with the ornaments God has placed around her neck, and courting the admiring gaze of the world by the magnitude of her plans, and the

splendour of her achievements ? Or, is she moving on in the spirit of self-distrust, and self-annihilation, with penitence for the past, and with prayer for the future, making God alone her strong refuge ? If she be not, then is it to be feared that God will pour contempt on all her worldly endowments, stain the pride of all her worldly glory, and entail upon her the withering curse once denounced upon His ancient yet presumptuous people ;—“ *Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me ; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin : That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth ; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt ! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.*”*

If the present elevated position of the Church be a conspicuous one, it is far from being a safe one. In proportion to her altitude, will be her exposure to the storms and concussions which agitate higher and less settled regions. Such a position incapacitates her to weigh well every

* Isa. xxx. 1, 2, 3.

movement, and to scrutinize rigidly every motive. She may be sadly and awfully deceived, and know it not, until the chastisements of God overtake her. Zeal for her own glory may be disguised in zeal for God's; splendid contributions suffice for splendid holiness; and along the stream of this world's favour she may float, wafted gently on by the breath of popular applause, to catch which, she may have skilfully shaped her course, and adjusted her sail. Oh! who does not see, that the Church is safe, and victorious, and only so, as she is deeply baptized in the spirit of holiness!

Again; the path along which the Church is so rapidly wending her way, is not the most favourable to the promotion of eminent holiness. The field she aims to cultivate is so extended a one—no less than the world—and the demand for more labourers so urgent, that the nurseries within whose enclosures the seed is first to be sown, and the plants first to be nurtured, may be suffered to decline in the richness of their soil, and in the temperature of their heat. New missionary colonies may be founded—new Bible stations may be explored, and the 'Missionary ship,' freighted with the bread of life, may leave our shores; but, *the piety at*

home—the spirituality of her directors and her ministers—her halls of learning, and her theological schools, may be undergoing an alarming decline ; and thus again the wail ascend to heaven, “ *they made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*” Let not the suspicion rest on him for a moment, that the writer undervalues the individual and concentrated efforts now in progress, by various Christian denominations, for the world’s conquest to Christ. Oh no ; his very soul exults in the labours, and the sacrifices of the denomination to which he belongs,—to cite but a single one from many examples,—in its aims to send the Missionary and the Bible, the oral and the written testimony of God’s great salvation to the dark places of idolatry, superstition and cruelty. But, while thus he exults, and at their side he would thus be found labouring, it behooves him not to close his eyes to the momentous fact, that, while religion *abroad* may be flourishing, religion *at home* may be decaying. That while the sun of righteousness is rising in light and splendour on other nations, he may be setting in shadows and in gloom on our own. The brevity allotted to this preface, will not permit the writer to strengthen

his argument by the citation of cases in point, which cluster thick on the pages of ecclesiastical history. Else, receding back to the Apostolic age, he might dwell upon the example afforded in the history of the Christian community planted by Paul in the city of Corinth, which, in proportion as its miraculous gifts augmented, its primitive piety declined. He might refer to the history of the Church at the close of the third, and at the beginning of the fourth century of the Christian æra ; at the time when, emerging from the fires of pagan persecution, Constantine solemnized her unholy and unnatural alliance with the civil power ; and how melancholy were the proofs thus gathered, that just in proportion as the sun of worldly prosperity and honour has shone upon her, there have sprung up, in luxuriant growth, the most noxious weeds of error, and corruption, and misrule. "Through too much liberty," says the eminent historian Eusebius, speaking of the nominal profession of Christianity in the reign of Constantine, "they grew negligent and slothful, envying and reproaching one another ; waging, as it were, civil wars among themselves ; bishops quarrelling with bishops, and the people divided into parties. Hypocrisy and deceit were grown to the high-

est pitch of wickedness. They were become so insensible as not so much as to think of appeasing the Divine anger; but, like atheists, they thought the world destitute of any providential government and care, and thus added one crime to another. The bishops themselves had thrown off all care of religion; were perpetually contending with one another, and did nothing but quarrel with, and threaten, and envy, and hate one another; were full of ambition, and tyrannically used their power." How the heart sickens as it thus follows the historian down the stream of time, and pauses, with him, to ponder the dark periods of the Church's history, during which God suffered her to pass within the cloud of his temporary withdrawment, and in gratifying her thirst for worldly distinction, did but send leanness into her soul. Oh! that from a knowledge of the past, we were wise to deduce lessons for the future. If there ever was a period of time when those lessons were needed, that period is the present. "The prompt and energetic action of the age—says a forcible writer, whose acute investigations into this subject, impart a solemn weight to his remarks—"opens the way for new temptations. In the rapid and vigorous determination

and action of society upon every theme, and in every task, we see renewed causes for christian watchfulness. We are called to exertion without much reflection : nothing but deep piety can meet this exigency. The public mind, in our times, is moving with unwonted speed and intense power. It is an age in which decision and action promptly follow inquiry and consideration, well nigh as quick as the thunderbolt waits on the gleam of the lightning. In such a period, the Ark of God is naturally carried onward, with a speed and vehemence, which require no common steadfastness and sureness of foot in those that bear the holy charge. In its rapid movements, it may often need to be steadied. Are the hands that shall be outstretched in the sudden service, like those of Uzzah, rash and unconsecrated, or are they such, by habitual watchfulness, as God requires in approaching His purity, *holy, without wrath or doubting?* Oh ! if the deep and fervid piety of Baxter, and Owen, and Bunyan, were needed in their times, when society moved deliberately, and the slow progress of events allowed time for reflection in shaping their plans, and leisure for their correction when defective, how much more intense and thorough is the spirit of devo-

tional watchfulness demanded in an age like ours, when men, who act at all, must act speedily, and when they are hurried on by the stream of events, with a swiftness which leaves little room to amend that which is erroneous, or supply that which is deficient. The characteristic energy and promptitude of social action, as it presents itself in our midst, demands an immediate and general advancement in personal holiness. We must be men deeply taught, imbued, and saturated with the Spirit—men who are wont to obtain an immediate access to our Heavenly Father, and receiving habitually speedy answers from our Heavenly Teacher, or how shall we save ourselves, and the sinners that surround us? Our follies will else betray the cause that we love. Oh! that God would teach us this lesson! Oh! for a revival of personal holiness in the churches.”*

We have thus far confined our remarks to the existing state of the Church in her collective capacity. But what is it that moulds her character, and hinders or advances her prosperity, but the *individual* holiness of her members? Let us not, in tracing the history of the Church, in her

* Rev. William R. Williams, on the State of Religion within the borders of the Hudson River Association. 1833.

collective form, forget the important fact, that each member constitutes a part of the whole, and that, *individually*, he is her blessing or her curse, furthering or retarding her spiritual conquests in the world ! In what a solemn attitude then, and under what fearful responsibilities does every Christian stand ! How pre-eminently important that each, for himself, should pant and wrestle for *exalted holiness*. Nothing, be it solemnly known, can compensate for its absence. There may be the collected stores of genius, and eloquence, and erudition, and wealth, but if they be not enshrined in eminent holiness, it were but as a palace of ice glittering in the sun beams, a splendid meteor, which

‘Leads but to bewilder, and dazzles but to blind.’

Eminent holiness has supplied, and may yet supply, the deficiency of eminent gifts ; but gigantic attainments, with a dwarfish piety, has too long been the bane and the curse of the Church. What gave to Brainerd, and Schwartz, and Martyn, and Vanderkemp of other times ; and to Judson, and Kincaird, and Gutzlaff of our own, the amazing moral power they wielded over the mental and spiritual condition of the heathen

world? Theirs were profound learning, and vivid eloquence, and sublime moral daring. But did the secret of their power lie concealed within these? It was the *spirit of holiness* with which their souls were so richly imbued, and which told, in every blow they struck on the towers of superstition, and in every blast they gave the trumpet of the Gospel. Their intellectual acquisitions would have accomplished nothing in shaking the temple of idolatry—but rather have clogged them in their work—had not those acquisitions been allied to eminent holiness and consuming zeal. “One devout thought,” said the seraphic Leighton, pointing to his books, “is worth them all;” placing literature in the rank it ought ever to sustain, subordinate to holiness of heart. “And thus, also,” says an able writer—“do we know, that many men, holding the noiseless tenor of their way in the uneducated walks of an unregistered and unenumerated ministry, destitute of the help of libraries, and ignorant of the name and of the being of commentators and scholiasts, and lexicographers, and interpreters, guided only by the dictates of common sense, illuminated by a sanctified conscience, are deeply acquainted with the will of God, are mighty in

bringing the truth to bear upon the consciences of men, and are abundantly successful in winning souls unto salvation.”*

It was not the design of the writer in penning this preface, to enter into the discussion of the important subject already so fully and ably treated in the ensuing pages; but simply to state his solemn conviction—a conviction not hastily yielded to, or thus publicly expressed, without the painful consciousness of its fit application to himself—that the depressed standard of personal holiness which has obtained among professing Christians of the day, demands a series of publications of that spiritual, searching, and practical tendency which the present will be found so eminently to possess. That it will not secure the favourable suffrage of some professors, he is prepared to believe. The man who affects to despise what is termed *experimental* religion, will turn from it with a sensation of loathing, and resuming the study of his German metaphysics, exist upon the meagre aliment they afford, until like the theology of which he is a disciple, his spirituality withers into a cold, lifeless, neological system.

*“Elevated Attainments in Piety Essential to Successful Study of the Scriptures. A Discourse by Francis Wayland, D.D.”

Let such a man retire, and ponder the meaning of these words—"He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself."* The man who is living in a state of unrepented, and unmortified sin, yet clad in the gorgeous 'livery of heaven,' will shrink from its searching appeals, which, laying bare his heart, and revealing the secrets of his life, will fall on his ears, as the words of Nathan thundered on the ears of Israel's backsliding king—"thou art the man!" But the believer who loves the truth, who has an experience of its power and its sweetness in his heart; who is painfully sensible of the perpetual bias of that heart to decline in the character and tone of its spirituality, and of the consequent necessity of the warning voice; whose daily posture would be, at the foot of the cross, and whose daily prayer is, a crucifixion of every sin, the "SPIRIT OF HOLINESS" will be an invaluable assistant in his aspirings after sanctity of heart.

That a nominal profession may, and even does with many, in the present day, pass current for vital godliness in the soul, is an appalling, and

* 1 John v. 10.

indisputable fact. We pause not to ascertain the causes to which it may be traced, but that such is the tendency of the age—a tendency to substitute the base for the legitimate coin, while the many receive and endorse it as though it came lustrous from the celestial mint, and vividly impressed with Christ's superscription, is a startling feature in the moral aspect of our times, which we dare not pass by unrebuked. "Perhaps," says a striking and original thinker, "no greater obstacle can be named, to the proper reception of the Gospel, than the error, alas! how common, of placing religion in a bare assent to its truths; of cherishing a settled and satisfied persuasion that we are Christians, simply because we subscribe, and in proportion to the unthinking readiness with which we subscribe to its dictates. So effectually does this delusion enclose and encase the heart, that 'the arrows of the Lord' though barbed and winged with an angel's hand, would fail to 'stick fast' in it. So potent is the spell, that it enables us to listen, not only to truths the most pungent, but even to the description which portrays the very delusion itself, without any self-application or effect. With such certainty does it turn aside and ward off every salu-

tary impression, that like a building defended from the lightnings of heaven by a rod of steel, we can venture among the forked lightnings of the truth, and yet come out from them unscathed, and untouched.”* That over this fearful evil other and not less holy men have uttered the plaintive wailings of regret, we gather from the language of a more ancient, but equally discriminating writer. “Oh ! what uneasiness,” says he, “to live amongst men, and find so few men ; and amongst Christians, and find so few Christians ; so much talk and so little action ; religion turned almost to a tune and air of words ; and amidst all our pretty discourses, pusillanimous and base and so eagerly dragged into the mire, self, and flesh and pride, and passion domineering, while we speak of being in Christ and clothed with Him, and believe it because we speak it so often and so confidently.”† And is it not a question, worthy of a passing reflection, how far may *we* be swayed by the influence of this counterfeit Christianity ; or, if ours be a true Christianity, how far may it be under the modifying and baneful influence of a worldly, temporizing policy, in carrying out our

* “The Great Teacher, by the Rev. John Harris. p. 86.

† Archbishop Leighton’s works, Vol. I. page 61.

plans, ostensibly for God's glory ! Oh ! what pen is adequate to expose the danger that lurks around us here ? Who will step forward, and tenderly, and yet faithfully lift up his voice in the ears of the Church, and bid her beware how far she may cherish this fatal delusion. New colonies may be planted, and immense sacrifices be made in sustaining them, and yet all may be done by worldly men, and on worldly principles. And even secular interest, personal distinction, and worldly expediency may enter deeply into the movements of those, who yet are not utterly destitute of some holy and honourable motives. O ! have not the most brilliant saints, and the most successful ministers deplored in secret before God, the deep treachery of their hearts, and the perpetual intrusion—marring, and defacing all they do for Him—of motives the most hateful and humiliating ? Witness the touching confessions of Flavel, and Baxter, and Edwards, and Brainerd, and Fuller, and Payson, men who soared the nearest, in their approximation to the Divine glory, the lower they sank in the depths of humility and self-abhorrence. And concerning whom, are we not often inclined to adopt a saying, extorted from a relative of the heavenly-minded

Leighton, by the 'rhetoric of his holy life'—"If none shall go to heaven but such holy men as these, what will become of us?" What then will shield us from the evils which threaten to come upon us, or, if already they have partially come, where shall we look for their corrective? "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains." Whither, then, shall we turn our longing gaze? Whither, but to the SPIRIT OF HOLINESS! Baptized under the cloud, and in the sea of His influence, we shall arise to the work of our God, with pure hearts, and clean hands. Are we *private Christians*? With what haste shall we then emerge from our lifeless forms, our commonplace religion, our "tune and air of words," and placing before us a higher standard of holiness of heart, simplicity of motive, unreserved consecration of all we are, and all we have to God, pant and agonize for its attainment, and pause not, until we had apprehended that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus. Are we *Christ's Ministers*? Oh, what enlarged views should we then have of the whole economy of redemption! He, Himself, how glorious would He stand before us. His Godhead! His huma-

nity The mysterious, yet adorable union! His stupendous love! His illimitable grace! The perfection of His righteousness, and the infinite efficacy of His precious blood! His ability, blended with such a readiness to save! and that salvation so full and so free! flowing down the channel of His own riven bosom, to the vilest outcast, brought to repentance in the day of His power. Then should we pass from our closets to our pulpits, with countenances glistening with the reflected rays of the Divine glory, and should tell of Christ's love, as we had never told it before, and should lift up Christ's cross, as we had never lifted it before. Words which now congeal into icicles upon our freezing lips, would then pass from us as with electric fire, and from pew to pew would their influence extend, until the scenes described by the holy Baxter should be witnessed again, when men, high in rank and intellect, fell prostrate in the midst of the wonder-struck congregation, awed, and overwhelmed by the demonstrative power of the truth. No longer "sacrificing unto our own net, or burning incense unto our own drag,"* *self* would be swallowed up in God, and God be all in all! ETERNAL SPIRIT! how the

* Habak: i. 16.

heavens and come down ! Thou who didst give to the Prophets all their inspiration, to the Apostles all their zeal, and to the Confessors all their constancy, descend on us, and anew sanctify, and dedicate us to thy service and thy glory !

That publications on the work and influence of the Holy Spirit are increasing, we hail as a happy omen of spiritual good to the Church. Already have there been issued from the English press, "Thoughts on the importance of Special Prayer for the General Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by Rev. James H. Stewart, A.M." "Four Sermons on the Person, Office, and Work of the Holy Spirit, preached before the University of Cambridge, by the Rev. Charles Simeon, A.M." "The love of the Spirit, by the Rev. Robert Philip," and now is introduced "The Spirit of Holiness," a twin sister of the rest. Oh ! if by these writings, we are but aroused to pour forth one united, universal, and heartfelt cry for the descent of the Spirit of Holiness on the Churches and on their Pastors, who will assume the sacred form of the prophet, and foretell the blessings that would follow ? This is what we need ; and this is all that we need. The Church is well nigh pressed down with learning, and elo-

quence, and wealth. We have men who understand all mysteries and all knowledge. We have men, the conflagration of whose eloquence has kindled its light on every hill top, from one point of the Continent to the other; and we have men, the tide of whose wealth has rolled, as by one mighty stream into the already glutted coffers of the Church. Here, then, are the altar and the wood; what lack we yet? O! we lack the *Spirit of Holiness* to descend, as with fire, and consume the sacrifice. Were this realized, what different men should we be! and what a new æra will have begun in our history! Entombing in one grave our controversies, our sectarianism, and our petty jealousies, we should arise as with spontaneity of movement, and press forward one deep, long, unbroken phalanx in the cause of our crucified Lord. May he richly bless the beloved author, and reader of this volume—own and sanction its publication: and to FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, one Triune JEHOVAH, all the honour and the praise shall be ascribed!

O. W.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., October 21, 1836.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE, NECESSITY, AND AUTHOR OF HOLINESS.

ROM. i. 4.—The Spirit of Holiness.

No man who really loves the Cross of Christ, and feels the efficacy of His atoning blood upon the conscience, can ever, in his heart, undervalue the operation of His Spirit, or *designedly* slight the sanctity of His commands. Drawn, as he has been by that Spirit, as a poor helpless sinner to the foot of that Cross, and there comforted, subdued and sanctified by the disclosure it makes, of the love of Him, who gave His own Son to die for sinners ; he cannot but be deeply conscious of the infinite debt which he owes. He feels too sensibly his

dependence on the Holy Comforter, *intentionally* to underrate His inward influences, and gratitude and love would alike excite the fervent desire that every precept might be written in the heart, and exhibited in the life.

And yet, some of those, who love to preach the distinguishing doctrines of grace, to preach them *broadly, plainly, distinctly*, to preach them, because they not only see them revealed in the Gospel, but because they also believe them to be most holy as well as comforting doctrines, have ever been accused of not sufficiently honouring the Spirit, in his work of sanctification, of not sufficiently pressing upon believers the sacred obligation of Christian obedience.

This is a grave and serious charge, not to be lightly made, and when made, not to be lightly treated by any of those who love the truth, as it is in Jesus. For the present, however, thus much only would I assert,

and I would assert it without fear of contradiction, that there is nothing in the broadest, plainest, and most distinct statements of those doctrines, doctrines which set forth the security, freeness, and glory of the covenant of grace, if *scripturally made*, made *according to the analogy of the word*, which can have any tendency, in themselves, to produce these effects. That which is the truth of God must inevitably tend to that God whose truth it is; the vapours which distil from the ocean pass down again in rivers to that ocean from which they spring.

But whether some colour may not have been given to such an accusation, by those who hold these doctrines, is what I will not venture to decide. Most surely, if truth after truth has been elucidated, doctrine after doctrine unfolded, and the work of the Holy Spirit, as sanctifying the elect people of God, be not set forth, and in-

sisted on ; if any thing, *immediately, directly, peculiarly* preceptive, be not minutely urged, and enlarged upon ; yea, if the holy sanctifying tendencies of those doctrines be not set forth as decidedly as the doctrines themselves, then is not the charge, heavy and important as it is, too well substantiated ?

The truth of God is his grand recipe for the maladies and sicknesses of a sin polluted world. But take out any of its ingredients, and the desired result is destroyed. Still farther, if the ingredients are not mingled in the ministry of the word, in that proportion, which they bear in the word itself, just so far as this is the case, is the sanative property of the whole impeded. May the Lord the Spirit give us a deep personal experimental sanctifying view of His work in the heart of man, and so reveal to us the glory of the doctrines, the preciousness of the promises and the sanctity

of the precepts, that they may be alike dear to our hearts ; while in our tempers, principles and practice, we exhibit clear and lucid proof that they effectually lead us to that God from whom alone they proceed, winning us to an holy consecration of ourselves to His glory.

“ The Spirit of holiness.”—Such is the name which the Holy Ghost here assumeth to himself—a name descriptive of that great covenant work, which He sustains in the plan of salvation.

As One indeed in the divine essence, One with the Father and the Son, He is and must be infinitely holy. As God, He cannot be otherwise. But it is not, I apprehend, so much in reference to His essential qualities, as it is in regard to His peculiar work, in the economy of grace, that He here sets forth His name as “ the Spirit of holiness.”

This is He who indited the Holy Scrip-

tures, under whose inspiration so holy are they, that one wonders how any man, except he be incapable of drawing any just conclusions, or utterly abandoned to all sense of shame, and even honesty, can ever deny their holiness; so holy, that with the whole Bible before him, one might think it impossible, for the most settled infidel not to allow, that if its principles were indeed the principles of the world, it would not be a fairer, better, holier, happier world than now.

It was “the Spirit of holiness,” who formed “that holy thing” spoken of Luke, i. 35, that holy nature of our beloved Lord, purified in its very conception.

But it is His especial, His peculiar work to sanctify the elect of God—to meeten them for their heavenly inheritance—to enable them to walk with God and glorify Him on earth, and enjoy His presence to all eternity.

And what a work it is!—a work requiring omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence—a work demanding infinite patience and infinite love, all which does the Eternal Spirit put forth in its accomplishment—a work, involving in it all our safety and all our happiness, for as “without holiness no man shall see the Lord,” Heb. xii. 14, so are holiness and happiness as indissolubly united, as sin and misery, as cause and effect. “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,” Is. lvii. 21, Prov. iii. 17, Ps. cxix. 165.

The points to which, in the present chapter, I would direct the minds of my readers, are the consideration:—first, of the Nature, then the Necessity, and thirdly, the Author of holiness.

And first its nature.

What is Holiness?

It is *not mere morality*, although it includes it. The holy man is one who feels

the solemn obligation of the moral precept, acknowledges it, approves of it, and lives under its influence. He does not, indeed, erect the superstructure of the second table of the law upon the ruins of the first, nor imagine that love to man can stand securely upon any other basis than love to God. But upon that groundwork he erects the strongest foundation, upon which the moral principle can ever stand. He is a moral man, but holiness is far more than mere morality.

It is *not a partial change of character*. This may be effected by strong natural convictions, heavy trials, distressing afflictions, or any thing that powerfully arrests the mind, and yet there may be no real holiness. Herod "did many things" because he feared John did many things probably which seemed to evidence a change of heart. But though some features in his life were altered, his heart was the same as

ever. He was dead in his sins ; he loved Herodias, and at last murdered the man whom he feared. Wool by superincumbent weight may be pressed into any form, but take that weight away, and its fashion is the same as before.

It is not a partial approbation of things spiritual, nor even transient acts of obedience in respect to them, which can certainly denote the existence of real holiness. Unholy persons may approve of and perform many things right, and were they performed upon holy principles, many things holy, and yet, in the absence of any such principle, be themselves unholy. Ahab repented—Balaam desired that he might die the death of the righteous—the foolish Virgins went out to meet the bridegroom—these were things right and proper in themselves, yet were the individuals who did them neither sanctified nor holy.

What then is holiness? Let the word of inspiration give the answer.

It is a restoration to the image of God. "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created him." Col. iii. 9, 10.

It is a renewing of the mind and conformity to the will of God, leading to a presentation of the body to His service, Rom. xii. 1, 2. "I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world : but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable will of God,"

It is the being moulded into the character and form of the truth of God. Thus the new man is created in the righteousness

and holiness of the truth, Eph. iv. 24. Thus, Rom, vi. 17, "but God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you," or into which you were moulded.

It is the being spiritually minded. Rom. viii. 6. "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

It is a new creation of the soul, whereby the believer in Christ becomes a new creature. "Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17.

Such is that holiness, without which no man shall see God—such is it to be holy—such are they that are holy.

But, let not the tender conscience be discouraged. Let not the feeblest real saint of God be cast down. The holiness of God's people on earth, is but an imperfect holiness. This restoration to God's

image—this renewal of the soul—this spirituality of mind is perfect, complete, entire, lacking nothing, *only* in the Church above. There the gold is without alloy, free from every particle of dross and defilement, pure, unmingled, unsullied gold. There the light is without obscurity. There the sun is always on the meridian, without a cloud to intervene and veil his glory. But not so here. Here the gold has its dross—the light is often obscured—and the sun has to burst through many a darkening vapour.

I am aware that this part of my subject requires much of heavenly caution, much of that wisdom, which is from above, to guide us aright. May the only Source of real wisdom graciously impart it. True holiness involves in it, a real decided bent of the mind and affection for God, a determining inclination towards that which God loves, a determining alienation from that

which God hates, and yet it excludes not some admixture of that which God hates. A supreme love to God, and a real sincerity of desire to please Him are essential to it. But this love is imperfect, though sincere. Like the moon it waxes and wanes—like the tide it ebbs and flows. There is a perfection of parts in it, but an imperfection of degrees. An acorn is an oak in its first principle, an oak seminally, and yet how different is that acorn when it expands itself and bursts forth in all its full and perfect foliage, with all its breadth of shade and beauty and majesty ; an infant is, in a sense, a man, a man in miniature, but how faint a resemblance does he bear to that man, in all his strength and vigour. There is in him a perfection of parts, but not a perfection of degrees.

A saint of God is one whose mind is savingly enlightened in the spiritual knowledge of sin, as the great evil, of Christ as

the great salvation from it, of God as the great good ; nor only this, his heart is led into real hatred of sin, into an unfeigned welcome of Christ, into a sincere love of God and His ways. This change in the understanding and affections necessarily sanctifies the temper and the pursuits, the principles and the practice. And he, who is the subject of it, lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 12, his conduct before others evidencing the reality of the change within.

But with all this real and delightful alteration of character and conduct, the true saint is still far removed from perfection. He desires it, he longs for it, and as faith and hope and love are in spiritual exercise, he aims at it; and would be holy as God himself is holy ; but " sin dwelleth in me," Rom. vii. 17, is the confession which bitter experience wrings from his heart, " the flesh lusteth against the spirit," Gal. v. 17,

sets forth the inward throe and struggling of his soul. Although he that was "once darkness" is now become "light in the Lord," Eph. v. 8, and in the habitual tenor of his life, walks as a child of light, yet is there still much remaining darkness. His understanding is not so enlightened, as that he shall perceive *at all times*, every object in its due proportion, see it just as it is ; yea it is not so enlightened, as that he shall see *at any time* the whole of the object, entirely and perfectly, and in all its features. "*Now*, we see through a glass darkly," is the language of an infallible witness, of one who not only did not, but who could not err in the judgment which he expressed. "We know but in part," asserts the same unerring teacher, and "then," and only then, when that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part shall be done away, "shall I know, even as also I am known," 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

As there is an imperfection of knowledge in the understanding, so in the heart is there an imperfection of love of that which is lovely, and of hatred of that which is hateful. We love an object only in proportion as we know its amiableness and beauty, or discern its suitableness to our own comfort and happiness. We hate it only as we discern any adequate reasons for our repugnance. The saint's perceptions of sin, as the great evil, and of God as the great good, are but limited perceptions, and consequently his love of the one, and his hatred of the other, are proportionally affected. He loves not God with that entireness of love, which His matchless excellencies deserve, neither hates he sin, with that unmingled hatred which its utter malignity demands. Sin dwelleth in him—this is both cause and effect. This is the *cause* of the remaining darkness in the understanding, the remaining obliquity in

the affections. This is the *effect* of that remaining darkness, that remaining obliquity, as exhibited in the imperfect degrees of our sanctification. And yet as the light of the opening dawn yields no legitimate argument, because of its faintness, against its being the light of the day, as the dross in the gold does not prove that it is brass and not gold, neither does the confessedly imperfect state of the most advanced saint in this world, at all invalidate the reality of his sanctification. *It is real*, because he loves God, fears God, walks with God, hates sin because his Heavenly Father hates it, longs to be perfectly free from it, because his Heavenly Father is perfectly holy. This is real, as far as it goes, it is assimilation to the Divine Mind : *but it is imperfect*, for it never entirely reaches the point at which it aims.

Such is the *Nature* of holiness, let us consider in the second place, its *Necessity*.

And this will appear *from the declaration of the word.*

As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, “be ye holy, for I am holy,” Lev. xi. 44, 45, 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” Matth. v. 8, and *only they*, for “there shall in no wise enter into it *any thing that defileth*,” Rev. xxi. 27.—“The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. v. 9. “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” In these portions of the Divine record, we have not only a strong and vehement exhortation to holiness, but solemn warnings that such holiness is essential to the enjoyment of eternal happiness. “Without it,” as we read in the last quoted passage, “*no man*,” whatever his gifts, his knowledge, his attainments, may be—whatever others may think of himself—“no man shall see

the Lord.” Such are the declarations of the Divine mind—such is the declared will of God.

The necessity of holiness is equally to be discerned from all the *tendencies of the covenant of grace*.

Are God’s people, the objects of His choice, before the foundation of the world? *He chooses them that they may be holy*, Eph. i. 3, 4. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.” Are they a redeemed people?—*His Son gave himself to die, to redeem them from all iniquity*, Tit. ii. 14, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Are

they called ? *Theirs is an holy calling,* 2 Tim. i. 9. “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” Are they distinguished with peculiar privileges ? *It is that they may be holy,* 1 Pet. ii. 9. “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Does the Lord chasten them ? *It is that they may partake of His holiness,* Heb. xii. 10. “For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure ; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.” Does he manifest himself to them as their God—does he draw near to them as their Father—admit them into His presence chamber, set before them the great

and glorious realities of His covenant—enable them to taste their sweetness and experience their power? *It is that they may purify themselves even as He is pure*, 1 John iii. 3. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” Does he restore them after they have departed from him? *It is that they may walk in the paths of righteousness*, Ps. xxiii. 3. “He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.

But especially is the necessity of holiness to be seen, from a consideration of *the very nature of God himself*. His acts and declarations concerning holiness are but the index of himself. He does all this, and declares all this, because He is what He is. These are but the streams that flow from the eternal spring, the essential holiness of His nature. They could not be otherwise than they are, because God cannot be otherwise than

He is. They are holy, because He is holy—"the Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty"—"of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."—He cannot even look on sin, and not abhor it, as the human eye turns from the sight of that which it loathes. Some there are, dear reader, who reject this view of God ; as a God of *love, mercy, pity, and compassion*, they delight to consider him, but not as a God of *holiness, purity, and justice*. Let such remember, if any such now hear me, that a love without holiness, is a love without beauty, yea, a love that has in it all deformity ; that such a love involves in it infinite imperfection, and boundless evil ; that as holiness is clearly a perfection, so unholiness is as clearly an imperfection, and in an infinite being, must be an infinite imperfection ; that it is and must be the glory of Jehovah, that every attribute of His should be in spotless perfection, and that to deny it is

to tread the very borders of atheism. God is holy, and hence all who are ever led to any real communion with Him, must be themselves holy. *As an Holy Being He hates sin.* By this we are to understand, not a *passion*, but a *principle*, the aversion of an holy nature from that which is opposed to itself, and such is sin. *As an Holy Being, He loves holiness.* Hence, nothing unholy, no one who loves and delights in sin, can have communion with Him. If this is impossible *here*, so will it be *hereafter*. If parallels can never meet, opposites can never agree. “What concord hath Christ with Belial?” “How can two walk together except they be agreed?” They cannot. An holy God, and an unholy creature can never walk together. Either the unholy creature must become holy, or the Holy God become unholy, which last, as it were blasphemous to assert, so were it folly to suppose—for

with Him there is no changeableness, nor shadow of turning. Hence, then, we see the indispensable necessity of holiness. It springs from the very nature of God himself. Could we suppose, for argument's sake, the sinner to be pardoned, accepted, justified, adopted, taken out of this lower world, and transported into the immediate presence of God, and yet remaining unsanctified and unholy. Would immunity from sickness, death, and outward woe form sufficient materials for happiness? Impossible? The atmosphere of Heaven is communion with God, and in that sinner's soul there are no materials for such communion. I will go further, an unregenerate unholy state would involve, even in heaven, the most pungent materials of exquisite misery.

Let me suppose an individual who hates another. They both live in the crowded city, and he rarely, if ever, meets the object

of his abhorrence, and except as he now and then crosses his path, he almost forgets him. Place these two individuals in one room together. Though surrounded by numbers, now and then their eyes meet. What is the effect? As he looks upon the man whom he abhors, all his enmity revives, the sleeping embers of his hate rekindle, and the long smothered fire will in a moment break out. But one step further, let all the rest drop off, one by one, and none but these two be left together, *then*, what follows? *The flame breaks forth in all its fury.*

Behold the case of the sinner. His mind is enmity against God. But he lives in the crowd of this world, and in a sense forgets the Being who is alone worthy of his love. But take him out of the crowd, place him with those who love the name of God, with those who love to pray to Him, to think of Him, to speak of Him. In-

stantly his enemy is before him, and all his enmity revives. But could we suppose this man, whose soul is full of hatred to God, in the immediate presence of God himself in heaven, and there to dwell for ever, I scruple not to say his very heaven would be hell.

Poor thoughtless, careless sinner, how awful must be thy state ! When the very place of happiness, in thy present condition, without holiness in thine heart to meeten thee for its enjoyment, would be a place of torture to thee ! The very perfections of God would be thy torment, His presence would be thy chiefest misery !

The Necessity of holiness is especially seen from *the very nature of God*.

But, thirdly, I would lead your minds to the consideration of *the Immediate Author of all that is holy*. That the work of holiness is the work of God alone, the word of God explicitly asserts. Speaking of

this great internal change, it declares, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13.

This work of holiness is not of blood. Parents cannot communicate it. Descent by birth cannot secure it. They *can* and *do* communicate a sinful, corrupt, depraved nature, but a pure and holy nature they do not, they cannot. The poison that rankles in our own blood shall flow in and contaminate the veins of those we love, but whatever is of grace descends not so.

It is not of the will of the flesh. The sinner cannot produce it in himself. The work of holiness is infinitely beyond all the energy of any creature—it is the work of Omnipotence alone. No creature, however pure, has power to accomplish it in another, much less has any creature, fallen and impure, any such power to convey it to himself. Such an one, indeed, cannot

have the *will*, even if he had the *power*. Consider what man is—he is not *only dark* as to spiritual objects, but “*darkness*,” Eph. v. 8. He not only *knoweth not* the things of the Spirit of God, but he *cannot* know them, that is, remaining in that state, 1 Cor. ii. 14. His mind is not *only alienated* from the life of God, Eph. iv. 18, but it is *enmity* against God, Rom. viii. 7. The moral sense is not only *deadened* to spiritual things, but the *heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*, Jer. xvii. 9. To suppose, therefore, that such a creature has any power, or even desire to accomplish any such work, is in reality to deny that he is such a creature. The power of self-salvation stands at least on a par in respect to its absurdity with that of self-creation; and, if we should say it were a fearful mistake to suppose that matter can create itself, at least equally so were it to imagine that a

sinner so dead in trespasses and sins can new create himself in righteousness and true holiness. We might in that case assert, that could he do it, he would accomplish a greater and more marvellous work, than the work of creation itself; a work begun and carried on in the midst of every opposing principle, and in direct opposition to it,—a work, whereby not only light chases the darkness away, but darkness chases itself away,—a work, in which enmity not only yields to love, but changes itself into love.

It is not of the will of man. No man can, strictly speaking, be the cause of holiness in *another*. The prophet, the apostle could not. The priest cannot. Baptismal water is impotent here, however some may deceive their own souls and the souls of others, by attributing that to the outward sign which is only true of the thing signified. The will of man achieves not the

holiness of God. How many a poor Catholic, how many a mis-called Protestant makes awful mistake, and runs into fearful self-delusion here.

It is of God. Excluding every one but God himself, as a cause of such holiness—*excluding fallen man*, whether we regard the producing it in himself or in others—*excluding*, as it regards any such power, *the highest angel and archangel*. Yea, we may venture to add, *excluding the means of grace themselves* from any such virtue and efficacy. My brethren, I beg not to be misunderstood on so important a point as this. The means which God has appointed, God will bless—yea, He has appointed them, in order to bless them. In the sober and prayerful use of them, we may not only hope for, but humbly expect the promised blessing. But, that can never be their sober, prayerful use, which, instead of considering them as channels through which

the blessing flows, regards them as the fountain from which it springs. God is himself the only cause of all holiness. Holiness is but a reflection of Himself, and, as through whatever medium the light may come, the sun is the immediate cause thereof, so, whatever may be the means of holiness, God is its alone author. It is *of God* solely—*of God* exclusively—*of God* from first to last. It is *of God* to commence it, to sustain it, to perfect it.

But the Scriptures not only assign such work of holiness to God generally, they attribute such work to *the Holy Spirit* particularly.

It is not God the Father, who *immediately* sanctifies the souls of his people. He sanctifies, indeed, 1 Thess. v. 23, but He sanctifies *by His Spirit*, 2 Thess. ii. 13. He draws, John vi. 44, but it is *by His Spirit*, Rom. viii. 14. As he is said to

reconcile and to save, but is by *His Son*, 2 Cor. v. 18, 20, Tit. iii. 4, 6.

It is not God the Son who *immediately* sanctifies the soul. While he is the meritorious cause of all sanctification, and the medium through which it descends from the Father to the church, the great storehouse of sanctification, while it is He who presents His people without spot before God, as seen in Himself, washed in His blood, and justified in His righteousness, and as King in Zion, sways the sceptre of His grace in the hearts of His subjects, delivers, by His own Spirit, their minds from the bondage of ignorance, their affections from the slavery of sin, their wills from the yoke of Satan, while He is thus the sanctification of his people, as well as their righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30. Yet does He not immediately sanctify.

It is God the Holy Spirit, who is the *immediate* source of all holiness, 1 Pet. i. 2.

The Father has the glory of electing love, the Son has the glory of redeeming mercy. But let the people of God ever remember, that it is the glory of the Holy Spirit to administer the riches of the Saviour's grace to the souls of His people. As the precious gift of the Son, while the Son is the precious gift of the Father, the Spirit leads the soul to Christ, and through Christ to the Father, administers of that fulness of grace which the Father has treasured up in the Son, and thus meetens it for the present enjoyment of both the Father and the Son, in holy communion, and walking with them *on earth*, and for the everlasting enjoyment of them *in heaven*.

Blessed Trinity—Trinity in Unity! Here we behold equality of love, and an equality of glory. Let it be our song on earth, as it will be to every true saint of God, the song throughout an endless eternity.

CHAPTER II.

THE INCIPIENT PRINCIPLE OF HOLINESS, AS DEVELOPED IN REGENERATION.

Rom. i. 4.—The Spirit of Holiness.

Having considered the *Nature*, the *Necessity*, and the *Author* of all holiness I now proceed to view the commencing operation of the Holy Spirit, in the work of holiness, as developed in *Regeneration*.

And I know not how I can more suitably introduce the subject than in the *First place*, by showing what is that previous condition from which Regeneration delivers us. *Secondly*, I shall endeavour to point out, the nature of Regeneration itself, and the work of the Spirit therein.

As to the condition of man, by nature, the condition of *every man*, before Regene-

ration, it is unspeakably awful and fearful. It presents a picture of death in its most appalling features, even a state of spiritual death, death in trespasses and in sins, Eph. ii. 1.

Behold the solemn spectacle.

The eye of the soul is closed. The perceptive power, *the mind*, is shut against the light of heaven, the light of God's word, the light of eternal truth, "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ." It is full of vain conceptions, a mind of vanity, Eph. iv. 12, full of vain thoughts, vain hopes, vain confidences, "vain imaginations," Rom. i. 21. It imagineth things that are not, but seeth not things that are, seeth nothing spiritual, nothing as it is. "The natural man, or man in a state of nature, not only receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," but "they are foolishness unto him, neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,"

1 Cor. ii. 14. The acutest wit, the most ready apprehension, the most brilliant genius, yield no assistance here. As to the perception of spiritual objects, the natural man is blind, the power of discerning them is gone.

The *understanding*, the selecting, determining power of the soul, is "*darkened*," Eph. iv. 18 ; its decisions, as to every thing spiritual, are all false ; its conclusions are altogether deceptive ; its judgments fatally erroneous. Hence the creature is regarded, the Creator slighted, hence time, with its momentary duration, is looked at and lived for, as if it were eternity ; eternity dealt with and disregarded, as if it were but a moment. Hence the perishing body is provided for, but the immortal soul neglected ; hence worldly interests and advantage meet with present care and attention, while religion, real vital religion, must wait for "a more convenient season," Acts xxiv. 25. Hence the

opinion of man, the consideration of what man, the creature of a day, the insect of an hour, shall *spe**ak* of, *thi**nk* of, *do* to us, can weigh as a mountain, while the esteem, favour, and approbation of the Eternal God, are but as a feather in the scale. Hence it is, that although sin cost the Father His Son, and the Son his Blood; though to atone for it, brought the Eternal Son of God from heaven, and though he be “over all, God blessed for ever,” caused him to stoop to our nature to become man, and as man, in that nature, to die, and that an accursed death; yet shall this darkened and benighted faculty of the soul so misrepresent this monstrous evil—this one thing which God hateth, as so mere a trifle, so mean an affair, so little a concern, as that a few forms, a few outward things, a few duties, a few resolutions, shall be able to quiet conscience, and be supposed to satisfy God. Hence is it, that

the holiness, justice, and faithfulness of Jehovah are not discerned, and the necessity, which those very perfections in God constitute for a complete satisfaction to be made to the penalty and precept of His own most holy law, is not felt. Hence the consequent necessity of an interest in the Son of God, who alone could make that satisfaction, is, as to any spiritual apprehension of it, altogether unperceived. Hence is it, that men see nothing of the real importance of repentance towards God, although He himself says, "except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish," nor of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, "although he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him."

All this is darkness, not only the darkness of spiritual disease, but the desolation and darkness of spiritual death.

Nor is this all, the *heart*, the seat of the affections, is also *darkened*, Rom. i. 21,

Eph. iv. 18. As the mind receives no spiritual perception, for it is blind, as the understanding forms false decisions, and erroneous judgments as to all spiritual objects because it is also blind, so is *the heart* no less blinded by sin. It *hates* things that are spiritual.—Hence is it that every unregenerate man hateth the light—that is, spiritual light. “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d.” John iii. 19, 20. Nothing can more solemnly portray the depraved state of man’s affections—he hates what he ought to love—he loves what he ought to hate—he loves sin, the only evil—and loving sin, he hates God the only good.

I am aware, dear reader, how this last

assertion, is by some doubted, by some unallowed, and by others altogether denied. They will confess, indeed, that there may be *some* so lost, so abandoned, so utterly depraved, of whom it may be said, that they hate God, but that this can be true of man universally, of every man in his natural state—of *all such* without distinction, this they can by no means acknowledge. We will, for a moment, consider this. In the first place, I freely make the concession, that many things gentle, benevolent, and kind, many things upright, just, and in themselves lovely, many traits of self-denial, fortitude, and largeness of heart, are discoverable in the unregenerate man. All this is unhesitatingly allowed ; and yet, notwithstanding this, the word of God avers that “the carnal mind is enmity against God,” Rom. viii. 7.

By the carnal mind is clearly, from the context, meant the unregenerate mind—

the mind unrenewed by the Holy Spirit of God. By a reference to v. 5, 8, 9, 13 of this eighth chapter, we find, most manifestly, that it is not a description of *some* of the grosser part of the world, those of mankind who may exhibit the more disgusting pruriency of the flesh, its more depraved forms, but that it is a delineation of *all* who are not led by the Spirit, who do not walk in the Spirit, who are not the sons of God, *of all who are not* regenerate ; and that of *these, of all these*, it is said, that they are in a state of enmity against God.

But, in what sense are we to understand the expression ? Is it supposed that by it we maintain that every unregenerate man feels hatred to all that is in God—all that is in the being and character of God—is averse to all worship, homage, and adoration of God—all obedience and submission to Him ? This is not, I confess, my view of the case. Some, yea

many, features are there in the nature of God, which give no offence to *man's* nature, fallen though it be, and occasion no degree of uneasiness to his sinful propensities. The benevolence and mercy of God, His long suffering and compassion, His grace, and His love, occasion no terror to the creature, however depraved, guilty, and sinful that creature may be. But not so is it with other features of the Divine mind. Holiness, justice, and faithfulness are perfections in God, all armed with terror against such a creature. They are not only opposed to him, but they testify against him. They not only threaten him with vengeance, but they must execute that vengeance.

Hence is the sinner's enmity against God.

Not only is holiness in God in direct opposition to unholiness in the creature—but justice in God cannot but denounce the punishment due to the delinquency, while

faithfulness constrains to its most righteous execution.

The unregenerate man will worship God, give him some outward service, pay Him some formal respect, and in all this exhibit no enmity, and feel none. But, when a God of holiness looks through all this external observance, pronounces it nothing worth, denounces the worshipper as a *criminal* needing pardon—as a *sinner* needing holiness—strips him of all his outside show—tells him, that without shedding of blood there is no remission---that “without faith it is impossible to please God”—that “of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof at the day of judgment”—that “except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God”—that “without holiness no man shall see God.” It is this which stirs up the latent embers—instantly the spark kindles, and, all is flame.

“*The carnal mind is enmity against God.*”

And what a deadly feature is this! enmity against God! against the best of Beings—against Him who is not only the *good*, but without whom nothing is good! My brethren, to be *indifferent* to such a Being would argue great depravity. What, then shall we say of utter *alienation* from Him? But if *this* be fearful wickedness, what a state must it argue to *hate* such a Being; and yet, the Scripture, asserting man's *enmity* against God, declares a condition inconceivably more terrible than even this!

Here, then, are the awful symptoms of spiritual death; blindness in the *mind*, blindness in the *understanding*, blindness in the *affections*.

Nor are these all—There is *insensibility* in his *conscience*. Nothing from without, nothing from within, no outward providence, however touching, no inward misgiving, however, in some cases, it may produce alarm and uneasiness, is attended with any

permanent result. Like the early dew, it *quickly* passeth away. If the unregenerate man does not always openly puff at his enemies, does not, "like the wild ass, used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure," always deride the power that pursues him, if sometimes he trembles like Felix, repents like Ahab, does many things like Herod, and flees from the horrors of reflection, like Judas, yet is his conscience, as it regards any spiritual apprehension, dead and insensible. It may be *sometimes* awake, and it is *but* sometimes, it may be *partially* alive as to the effects, consequences, and dangers of sin, but as to its real evil, its true character, its essential opposition to God, its inherent hatefulness, in all this, it is dead. Not only his mind, but his *very conscience is defiled*, Tit. i. 15.

Behold, then, that state from which regeneration delivers the soul, that state

which renders it of an essential, and indispensable necessity.

What dreadful symptoms, what a fearful death have I been describing ! And is it not solemn *that all* that read this, *all without one exception*—awful thought, are, at this moment, either under the power of this direful destruction—and *are dead in their sins*, or quickened and made alive, through the riches of God's grace, are conscious that *they once were so*.

This is the true and fearful plague.—Compared with this, the pestilence that walketh at noon-day, the pestilence which once ravaged our beloved country, horrible as it was, was as nothing.—What, though the dead cart sounded incessantly through our streets.—What, though the pit, insatiated with its daily and hourly, and almost momentary victims, still opened its fell jaws for more.—What, though desolation and despair, and dread, and horror, and mad-

ness reigned all around. Yet, what is the plague that consumes, wastes, and destroys the body, compared with this far more terrible death, which not only ravages and depraves the soul, but meetens it for eternal death and everlasting destruction?

In that desolating exhibition of God's wrath, London was its first and principal seat; the rest of the kingdom, the great mass of the country in a sense escaped. But this plague pervades and destroys the whole world. Not a city, nor town, nor village, nor hamlet, nor house, nor family, nor individual escapes—all are affected, yea, rather, all are dead.

This is the most loathsome of all plagues. It is this which defiles a man, Matth. xv. 18, 19, 20. It is this which makes earth to be but some large hospital—or rather some vast charnel house, full of death. We may go further, and say, *It is this which makes hell to be hell*. Yea, we may go further still, and aver, *It is this*, which

if admitted there, *would make even heaven itself to be hell.*

Secondly we are to regard the nature of Regeneration, and the work of the Spirit therein.

The previous consideration has prepared the way for our treating of our main object, that of Regeneration itself. For if this be a true description of the nature and condition of man, then do we see, that as long as he remains in this state, it is a moral impossibility that he can be a denizen of heaven; that it is far less repugnant to reason to imagine that the bestial nature can have any real communion with the human, than it is to suppose that the human nature thus depraved, and thus under the dominion of sin, can have any real fellowship with the divine. “What communion hath light,” or can it have, “with darkness?” 2 Cor. vi. 14. Yea, we are prepared by this consideration to expect that

whatever be the nature of that change, which must pass upon man to render him capable of the enjoyment of a land of spiritual life and light, and holiness, and joy, it must at least be a remedy for those evils which we have been before describing. Spiritual death must be exchanged for spiritual life. Spiritual darkness must give place to spiritual light. The *mind* must have *spiritual perception*. The *understanding* must form *spiritual judgments* and *decisions*. The *heart* must have a *spiritual, holy bent, and inclination*. The *conscience* must be *spiritually enlightened and purified*, or heaven would be to the soul no heaven.

If we look at the subject, *in a general point of view*, we find Regeneration, which is nothing less than the incipient principle of this mighty change set forth in the scripture, as

being born of the spirit, John iii. 5, 6,

a *quicken*ing from a death in trespasses
 and sins, Eph. ii. 1, 2,
 the *being born again*, John iii. 3,
 it is described as a *spiritual resurrection*, Col. iii. 1.
 a *renovation in knowledge*, Col. iii. 10.
renovation in the spirit of the mind,
 Eph. iv. 23,
 a *new creation in righteousness and
 true holiness*, or the holiness of the
 truth, Eph. iv. 24, 2 Cor. v. 17.
 the *turning from darkness to light*,
 Acts xxvi. 12, 18.

Such is the general description which the Holy Spirit of God has given us in His word, of the work of Regeneration, His own work in the soul of man.

But it will be necessary to consider the subject more *particularly and minutely*.

First the Scriptures declare that, in this glorious work of regeneration, *the Holy*

Spirit implants a new and living principle in the soul, *a new and holy nature*, sometimes denominated “a divine nature,” because it is from God himself, the gift of His own love, the fruit of his own power, and partaking of His own purity and holiness, 2 Pet. i. 4,—“a seed that remaineth,” 1 John iii. 9, or germ of holiness, sown in his heart by the Holy Ghost,—“a new heart,” “a new spirit,” new, because so entirely opposed to the old heart, the old spirit, the corrupt, natural principles of the unregenerate heart, “an heart of flesh,” an heart, soft, tender, impressible, Ez. xxxvi. 26.

It was of this new nature our Lord spake, in that His most interesting conversation with Nicodemus in the third of John. After asserting *generally* the absolute necessity, of an inward change of heart, in these remarkable words, “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” John iii. 3, he then *more particu-*

larly declares, “that which is born of *the Spirit*, is *spirit*,” v. 6, spiritual in its nature, desires, actings, tendencies, and objects.

An unregenerate man, or one dead in trespasses and in sins, has but one nature or disposition, a nature which he derives from the flesh, and which “is flesh or fleshly,” evil and inclining him to evil, “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.” John iii. 6. But in the covenant of grace, it is secured that all who are in that covenant, the whole elect family of God, shall, in due time, be made partakers of a new, divine, holy, spiritual nature, which shall not only oppose, and contend against, but, *in the main*, control, and subdue the old, depraved, and corrupt nature. So that they not only have the flesh, or that which is fleshly, which lusteth against the spirit, but they have the spirit, or that which is spiritual, striving against

the flesh, and not allowing them to fulfil the lusts thereof, Gal. v. 16, 17.

In the production of this new and holy nature, the Holy Spirit ordinarily and in the usual mode of his operation, works *not without the word*, but *by the word*, “of His own will begat He us, *with the word of truth*,” James i. 18. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God*,” 1 Pet. i. 23. By His own word, and especially by his own gospel, does the Holy Spirit bring into being this principle of spiritual existence. Nor is this to be wondered at, for as it was by falsehood and perverted views of God that Satan wrought in the production of this seed of spiritual death, so by the truth, by right and just views of the divine character, as seen through the cross, is brought forth the germ of spiritual life.

From this holy communication arises the *renovation of the mind*, the *spiritual*

illumination of the understanding, the purifying of the affections, the cleansing, the sanctifying the conscience. Hence is it that he who is made partaker of this inestimable mercy, not only sees and discerns objects, before hidden from his eyes, but he forms other conclusions, comes to other decisions and judgments, and not only so, but he is brought to place his affections upon other things than those which once allured, engaged, captivated him, 1 Cor. ii. 12, Eph. i. 18, 2, Cor. iii. 18, iv. 6.

We see the existence of this new and holy nature in the first openings of the light of heaven, the rising beams of holy truth upon his soul. These, at the first, it is acknowledged, are often faint, and very feeble. It is as the indistinctness of the early dawn ; little more, perhaps, than first a thought, a desire, then a prayer—*Yet is it light*—The individual sees what he saw not before—though feebly and indistinctly, yet really. It

is on the whole a true and just perception, as far as it reaches, though the extent of its circle of vision may be very small and circumscribed.

But *the light advances*. *The law* with all its sanctity, purity, and perfection, is brought before him as the law of a good and holy God. He sees what it demands—he acknowledges the equity of its requirement—the justice of its threatened penalty. He sees that if the Lawgiver be *holy*, His *law* must be holy—that if He, whose law it is, be *the One Good*, the law must demand all the heart, all the mind, all the soul, all the strength, as His due, otherwise *it would deny him to be that One Good*.

He sees that all which the creature has, being most justly and equitably His, the creature is most justly and equitably condemned for withholding it from Him. All this is not only presented to his *understanding*, it is laid upon his *conscience*. He

not only perceives this to be true, but he feels the truth which is unfolded. That awful and stupendous conclusion, *I am a sinner*, is placed, by undeniable inference, upon his heart. He stands without excuse, with the eye of a God of perfect holiness and purity upon him. Abashed and abased and confounded, he is left without one plea in himself, or one ray of hope. All this is awfully new to him. It is quite a new scene—a new world.

But as the Light advances still, God in Christ is discerned—that God who so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life—*that* God, who sends ambassadors of peace with a message of peace—*that* God, who *beseeches* sinners in the Gospel, to be reconciled to Himself. This is altogether a new and wonderful object presented to his spiritual vision. That

God should forgive sin at all, is wonderful, but that in order to do it, He should give His Son to die for sin, is far more wonderful still ; that He should forgive it, freely, fully, absolutely, unchangeably, everlastingly, look upon every one that believeth in that Son, as one with Him, for His sake blot out all his transgressions, remember his sins no more, accept him, justify, and save him—this is stupendous truth. It seems almost too much to believe, and for a time, and frequently for a long time, he finds it to be so. But, when faith is imparted to believe the truth as it is in Jesus, when the darkness of unbelief fades before the brightness of this ray of holy light, this ray from heaven, that beams in the gospel, then is holy, spiritual, grateful love kindled in the affections, even love to that God of grace and mercy, from whom all the grace and mercy flow.

Nor is the existence of this new and holy principle less discerned in its after progress.

It is seen in that opposition which exists between itself and that flesh, wherein there dwelleth no good thing. Such opposition is supernatural. The force of mere natural conscience, though inconsistent and fickle in its operations, may, it is confessed, produce an inward struggle in the breast against *some* sin, but never *does* it, never *can* it, present uniformity of opposition to *all* sin. Some, yea very much, we may even assert, the far greater proportion of sin, *is allowed by the natural conscience*; although it may sometimes produce serious disquietude and wretchedness, and real alarm, on account of that which it does *not* allow. But where a new and holy principle exists, there is a real, though imperfect, opposition to all sin. “That, which I do, I allow not,” is its genuine language. This very opposition being nothing less than the effect of the new spiritual nature in our hearts, sustained as

it is, and excited by the Holy Spirit—its blessed Author. If “the flesh lusteth,” or striveth “against the spirit”—and that of its own nature, because it is flesh—“the spirit” striveth “against the flesh,” of its own nature, because it is spiritual. “These are contrary the one to the other.” And in nothing, perhaps, is the existence and purity of this divine principle more clearly evinced than in this very opposition to evil.

How little is this considered by many of the family of God. Not only are their souls discouraged by reason of the way, its roughness, and steepness, and straitness, but especially by painful doubts and misgivings, whether they may not, after all their severe struggle, be deceiving their own souls. And whence the suspicion? They are the subjects of much inward conflict. But whence the conflict? Does it not argue life, yea, life in action? Whence “the good I would”—“the evil I would

not," as the real confession of the heart, but from a principle with holiness within, which struggles for the evil and strives for the good? As a dead corpse feels nothing, because it is dead—so a soul, dead in its sins, has no true sensation of sin's heavy pressure. It is life within that feels, and heaves, and struggles, and groans. Yea, the stronger its energy, the more sensibly will it feel the power that opposes, restrains, and in a sense coerces, though it cannot subdue it, Rom. iv. 14.

The actings of this new nature are also seen in those views of Jesus Christ as a Saviour, which it entertains. The worldly man the worshipper of the world's trinity, money, pleasure, ambition, the proud Pharisee—the thoughtless, the prayerless, the desperate, all see no beauty in the Saviour of sinners.

The unregenerate see no real beauty in the Son of God. They will sometimes

speak of God, and that with some degree of respect, will acknowledge their obligations to Him, and deprecate any avowal of rebellion against Him. But, as to the Son of God, as a Saviour, saving by His death, justifying by His obedience, saving sinners, saving the lost, the ungodly, the hopeless, the helpless—this, as to its real, spiritual import, is to them unintelligible—but, as far as they understand it, they hate it. This is not only mysterious, but offensive. The very thought is a blow at the root of pride, and they revolt at the bare mention of it. The reception of this truth is incompatible with a state of unsubduedness of heart, and their heart is unsubdued, high, and lofty, and proud.

But what is the Saviour of sinners to poor, conscious, convicted, humble, self-condemned sinners, that believe in Him? What is bread to the famished wretch, sinking for hunger, and ready to die? What

is water to the thirsty soul, fainting beneath the burning heat? What is the life-boat to the struggling, sinking, exhausted sailor? Such is Jesus, the Son of God, the *willing, able, full, and free* Saviour of the poor, the needy, the weary, the heavy laden—"to you which believe He is precious." The believer loves Christ and lives upon Him. This is the very acting and tendency of the new nature within him, which as it is implanted in the heart by the Spirit of Christ, or as one may more correctly say, implanted by Christ himself in the heart by his Spirit, so does it tend towards Him who is its life, Col. iii. 4, and live upon Him as its support, John vi. 57.

His free welcomes cheer the drooping heart. They are adapted to its necessities—they suit its emergencies—they meet its wants—they satisfy its desires. A Saviour like this is the very Saviour for such a sinner. A sense of sin endears him to such

a soul. Consciousness of unworthiness makes His cross to be precious. A conviction of having no righteousness that can justify before God, leads him to esteem the righteousness of Christ, as above money and above price. His person, as God-man, God in the glory of his own Deity, man in the purity of his sinless humanity, is dear to his very heart, and he feels that he is lost without it. The holiness of His life, His humility, meekness, faithfulness, and love, His denial of self, His devotedness to God, His patience and forbearance, and gentleness, and condescension, form a mark at which he aims, an object to which the desires of his soul are directed. The fulness of that grace which the Father has laid up in Him, is the treasure to which he betakes himself in his hour of need, and emptiness and poverty. Thus is "His Name as ointment poured forth." The love of the Saviour occupies that

heart which could once seek its idol in self, the world, and sin. He, in whom he once saw no beauty, "is now the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely," and is "fairer," in his eyes, "than the children of men."

And do we not also trace the energy of this same heavenly principle in the dissatisfaction which the believer feels as to present attainments, and in his longings for further progress in the divine life? The real saint of God would be without sin. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure," 1 John iii. 3. But many things he still doeth, which he would not, and nothing as he would. "*Not as though I had already attained,*" Phil. iii. 12. is the family language. Nor is it less so, "*I follow after,*" I long for perfect conformity and endeavour after it, "reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark." Phil.

iii. 13, 14. While the believer in Jesus takes up his rest in the finished work, the atoning blood, and perfect righteousness of the Son of God, yet is it not the rest of inactivity and sloth. As the blood, flowing through the veins, is the great medium of life in our natural body, so is the blood of Christ, flowing through the members of his spiritual body, the Church, the great means of supplying it with strength, vigour, and elasticity. The believer longs to be conformed altogether to the will of God, and never can take up his rest in present attainments. Here is the buoyancy, or rather let me say the heavenly tendency of the new principle. It mounts upward, and, again, it mounts upward still. It is a well of water, springing up into eternal life, that seeks its own level and ascends still more, and more, and more, towards the spring from which it takes its source.

Often, it may be, dear reader, has thy

soul been brought into discomfort, perhaps into doubt and dismay, because of thy short comings, thy failures, the little answer, which thou thinkest that thy prayers have received, for more deadness to, and sin and the world, for more spiritual life and vigour, more love to God and submission to His will. Often has thy spirit been cast down, at thy little advance in the ways of holiness, and thou hast been ready to say, am *I* a child of God? When thou dost lay thine head upon thy pillow, and art led to detect some of the inmost evils of thine heart, when thou mournest over thy defects in true spirituality, thy want of an entire devotedness, the little surrender of thy whole heart to God, the poverty of thy very desires, the lowness of thy expectations, the earthliness of thy mind, thou art but little aware that this is the very effect of the new nature within thee, the light of life in thy soul, thus

exhibited in longings after more entire obedience to the will of God, and in dissatisfaction with thyself because thou fallest so much below it.

Thus does the Holy Spirit implant a new, divine, spiritual, holy nature or principle in the soul, whereby He illumines the mind, rectifies the understanding, purifies the affections, and cleanses and sanctifies the conscience, and thus does He give a new and holy direction to the life, influencing by the love and fear of God the temper, the spirit, the principles, the practice, leading the believer in Jesus Christ, *to walk with God.*

Nor is this all—In the work of Regeneration, He, *in the second place, sustains this nature in the soul of man.* He does not create a new nature, and then leave it to act according to its own inherent energy, but He sustains that nature. This is declared in 2 Cor. iv. 16, “the inward man

is renewed day by day." By "the inward man," we are to understand the same which is spoken of in Rom. vii. 22, "the new man," Col. iii. 10, "the inner man," Eph. iii. 16, "the divine nature," 2 Pet. i. 4, and this is declared to be renewed, and that day by day. And by whom is it renewed but by its Author the Spirit? And hence is it, the seed of holiness *remaineth* in the soul, 1 John iii. 9, and is not only uncorrupted but is *incorruptible*, 1 Pet. i. 23, because continually *renewed*, *sustained*, and *kept alive* by the quickening Spirit of holiness. But for this, Satan would long since have destroyed it, and that for ever. The new nature, I apprehend, could no more keep itself, than could Adam keep himself in his pristine innocence, when he ceased to maintain his dependence upon the living God. The moment he withdrew himself from the hand that supported him, and tried to walk

alone, he fell, and that as necessarily as the branch, severed from its parent stem, falls to the ground. And but for the sustaining energy of God the Eternal Spirit, within us, maintaining His own work, moment by moment, keeping alive that spark of holy fire in our spirits, that work had long since been destroyed, the new nature had long since been extinct, and we had been again in the cheerless darkness of spiritual death. The Holy Spirit sustains his own work, and that *at all times*. The *actings* of spiritual life vary, but the *principle* of spiritual life is always the same. In the midst of that warfare, which the apostle so feelingly describes in the 7th of the Romans, he declares, "The good I would," "the evil I would not," "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," "with the mind I myself serve the law of God," "I would do good," Rom. vii. 19, 21, 22, 25. Here is an abiding principle,

abidingly sustained. This is wondrous grace in God the Eternal Spirit. Grieved as He is by our sin, opposed as He is by the flesh, that dwelleth in us, still does He keep the spark alive in the midst of the stormy ocean. The waterfloods have often obscured it, the storm has well nigh subdued it, but once more it revives; once more it sparkles, it shines amidst the billows, the waves cannot entirely extinguish, the storm cannot quite destroy, nor the waterfloods overwhelm it. Here is the security. The Spirit of Holiness sustains, always sustains His own work. But *how* does He sustain it? In the use of those means which He has Himself appointed. By prayer, by the word, the hearing, the reading of it, by meditation, by faith, by repentance, by obedience, does He sustain and cherish and support this new and spiritual nature. As the word of God forms its true and necessary aliment, as prayer is the appointed medium by which

larger supplies of grace are communicated for its growth and increase, so are faith and repentance and obedience the means by which it is exercised, and thereby kept in spiritual health, strength, and liveliness, and vigour.

And yet, *Thirdly*, it is not so much that the Spirit of Holiness sustains His own work in the soul—as that he *inhabits* the soul of the believer, and thereby sustains and supports that work, 1. Cor. iii. 16. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” 2. Cor. vi. 19. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?” The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the peculiar blessing of God’s dear children. As, in the temple of old, the glory of the “holy of holies,” was the brightness of the Divine presence there, so, in the child of God, does God himself dwell by his Blessed Spirit, and make him

in very truth the temple of God. What he enjoys is not so much an holy influence from God, as it is God himself influencing the soul. It is not so much a life—a light from God, as it is God himself, his life, and his light. Thus, is it true, that his life is hid with Christ in God, Col. iii. 3, that Christ is *the very life* of his people, 4, and that, because He liveth, they shall live also, John xiv. 19.

This is a truth most consolatory to the mind; believers in Christ are the very temple of the Holy Ghost. This assurance ought to cheer the spiritual combatant—every true soldier of Jesus Christ. In the midst of the hard battle, the fearful fight, the ceaseless struggle, the never-ending warfare with the world, the flesh, the devil, there is One, who having taken up His abode in them, sustains their weakness, bears up their infirmities, and by His holy inhabitation, maintains the actings of spiri-

tual existence, as the source of every holy desire, and all holiness of walk and conversation “*I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them,*” Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

Thus have I attempted to show what is the state of man prior to his being regenerated; what is the *nature* of Regeneration itself, and what is *the work of the Holy Spirit therein*.

And now, my brethren, the *Great*, the *Solemn*, the *All-important* question is—are *we* born again? Oh, what miserable and awful trifling will it be found, to rest in a mere description of this great inward change, and not partake of such a change! If all the gold of the universe were exposed to our view, and we were left under the pressure of famishing poverty, our case would only be more pitiable than before.

What a point for deep inquiry, for the

most solemn and prayerful investigation:—
 am *I* born again?—Am *I* a new creature?—Am *I* regenerated? Oh! what need is there for each one to say, “search me, O God! and try my heart.” As without holiness no man can see God, so without regeneration there can be no holiness.

And, as thou searchest, beware that thou *mistake not nature for grace*.—Nature can imitate grace, and thus are many awfully and fatally deceived. Has grace its *trembling* for sin? Felix, too, can tremble, Acts xxiv. 25. Has grace its *desires* for Heaven? Balaam was not without them, Numb. xxiii. 10. Has grace a *zeal of God*? Israel, unregenerate Israel, had this also, Rom. x. 2. Will grace *do many things, which ought to be done*? Herod could exhibit this, Mark vi. 20. Nature can give the body to be burned, endure martyrdom itself, 1 Cor. xiii. 3, bestow all

its goods to feed the poor, 3, can cleanse itself from outward defilement, in the walk and conversation, 2 Pet. ii. 22, can have knowledge of the truth itself, 21, yea, *all* knowledge, 1 Cor. xiii. 2, and yet be nature still. Therefore, mistake not nature for grace. Nature can do all these things, for there may be nothing spiritual in the doing them. A mere alarm of conscience may exist without repentance for sin—a desire for Heaven may be found in that soul that is a slave to the world, and an enemy to a God of Holiness, and to that way to Heaven, which He has appointed. A natural man may know the truth as a theory, as a beautiful theory he may admire ; but in its humiliating principles, its holy tendencies, he has no knowledge, no real experience, and consequently no real acquaintance. Outward reformation, outward sacrifices, outward exertions may be seen, where an internal principle of purity, where the

dethroning of self and the real worship and love of the true God are not to be seen. Nature can imitate grace. Is this wonderful? Oh no! Why should we wonder that the great deceiver should thus deceive souls with his most subtle forgery? Is it not a masterpiece of cunning, that he should thus, like Michal, palm off the senseless image for the living man? Perhaps I may be as a messenger sent by the king, to detect in some one, the awful imposture.

Mistake not grace for nature.—Many, who are the true partakers of grace, need the caution. *They read the lives of holy, devoted, heavenly-minded men.* They note their humility, contrition, self-denial—their singleness of motive, their pantings after God and holiness—their exalted thoughts of the Saviour of sinners—their tenderness of conscience, their love of souls; and as they read, their hearts fail them.

They look at themselves, and are aware of so many inconsistencies, of which, indeed the world knows nothing, but of which the All-seeing Eye has a perfect perception; so many wanderings in heart from the strait path of duty, so much of self-seeking, self-dependence, self-applauding, instead of a single, simple, entire aiming at the Divine Glory, that they are, at times, almost in despair.

They talk with others, and the way, in which the Spirit of God has wrought with many, appears to be so striking, so strong, their arrest was attended with such mighty effects, convictions so deep, alarm so painful, wrestlings in prayer so fervent, and *afterwards* a reception of the Saviour so simple and undoubting; and this was followed by such a filial view of God, as a father and a friend—such an honest, upright, unreserved and close walking with Him as such, that when they think of the *gentle, slow, gradual*,

silent character of their own walk, they are almost disposed to ask, whether there has been any real progress, nay, whether there be any real life in their souls. Their eyes have been opened so gradually, their change of perception, purpose, and affection has been so slowly produced; sin's sinfulness, and God's holiness, and the Saviour's suitableness have been by little and little so silently developed—their yielding themselves to God has been attended with so little of an outward and manifest change, that they are sometimes ready to attribute that to nature altogether, which is, nevertheless, the true grace of God within them. They mistake grace for nature; they forget that endless diversity of operation which marks the work of the Holy Spirit. They forget that, as the tender insignificant reed in *creation* is as much the workmanship of the Deity as the lofty oak, the lord of the forest, so, *in*

grace, is the feeblest saint that ever found Christ precious, sin to be hateful, a throne of grace to be needful, and the God of grace to be the object of love and confidence, as much the fruit of the omnipotent hand of God, working through Christ as the Mediator, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as was Saul of Tarsus, or the beloved disciple. Mistake not grace for nature ; be thankful for the least measure of grace, covet the most. Be thankful for what thou hast received, but seek after and pray for all that God has promised. Nature can mimic grace, but nature never drove thee to the cross of Christ for pardon—to the throne of God for holiness—never made thee mourn for sin's sinfulness, nor long for inward conformity to the divine image of God.—None but the regenerate walk in these ways. “Add to thy faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge,” but do not live in the region of perpetual ques-

tioning of thy faith. The way for its increase is holiness. But the region of holiness is not that of doubt, misgiving, and uncertainty.

Art thou born again ? Admire that sovereign exhibition of grace and power which has been displayed towards thee. Give God the glory. For He, the Lofty One, who, in the sovereignty of His power, commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the material creation without thee, hath, in the sovereignty of His grace, brought the light of heaven into thy soul, in the new and more wondrous creation within thee, 3 Cor. iv. 6. His was that word of invincible energy, mercy, and love, which said, "let there be light and there was light." His was the mighty fiat, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Oh, how entirely does the delusion of man's power, even

partially, to regenerate his own heart, fade before the truth. For how inconceivably narrow must be the ground on which the fond conceit of man's self power can hope to stand, when on one side, God *takes away the stony heart*, and on the other, *He gives the heart of flesh*. Give God the glory—who said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood—live. Give Him all the praise, who in the merest love, mercy, compassion, and most unmerited grace, plucked thee as a brand out of the burning. Forget not that such is the heinous character of *all* sin, and such the wilfulness of *thy* sin, that the purest justice and equity had not been *for one moment* sullied, if that interposition of mercy had never been extended to thee. Give the Father the glory of His electing love, and gratefully acknowledge *the love of the Spirit*, in His new creating, sustaining, indwelling power, as the precious gift of Christ, the costly

token of a Father's love. How often has He raised thee when fallen, cherished thee when faint, healed thee when wounded, restored thee when wandering out of the way. See—admire—adore the grace that has been shown thee.

Art thou born again? Then remember thy high and heavenly calling. *How vast thy privileges!* An adopted child of God, who was once a captive of Satan, 2 Tim. ii. 6, and a child of wrath, Eph. ii. 3, even as others. Not only art thou pardoned, justified, accepted in Jesus Christ; thou art more, in Him, thou art a son, a daughter of the living God, 2 Cor. vi. 18, predestined to this in eternity, Eph. i. 5, and called to it in time, Rom. viii. 15. Never lose sight of the glorious distinction. What, though life's journey be often painful and wearisome, though the inward conflict be a burthen to the spirit, the outward trials afflictive and distressing, still a Father's

bosom, a Father's ear, a Father's arm, a Father's eye, a Father's home, make rich amends—this is a cordial for the hour of sorrow—this is an antidote against fainting—these are thy high, thy distinguished mercies—live much, as thou art enabled, in the humble, happy, and holy use and enjoyment of them—to walk with God as a child with a father, is the highest mercy to which thy regeneration has introduced thee, 1 John iii. 1, 3.

Art thou born again? How vast are thine obligations? Hast thou a new and divine nature, art thou a temple of the Holy Ghost? Remember, as all this flowed freely, largely, out of the Father's heart, in the riches of His most unmerited grace, so forget not that all these streams of mercy flow beneath the cross of Christ through the incarnation, the sufferings, and death of the Son of God. He must stoop, that thou mayest rise—He must drink the cup of wrath, that thou mayest drink the cup of

blessing—He must be a Son of man, that thou mayest be a son of God. What motives spring forth hence to yield thyself to Him, as thy rightful Lord! Listen to every motion of His Spirit within thee. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby thou art sealed, by any wilful sin. Remember also while the new nature is sustained by its Author, the Spirit of God, He sustains it by the means which He has Himself ordained. In prayer, especially secret prayer, in reading, hearing the word, meditation, confession, thanksgiving, in simple reliance upon the Saviour, in repentance towards God, especially after *any known sin*, in walking obediently with Him, *in all known duty*, these are the means whereby the Spirit nourishes and invigorates His own work, and to the performance of which, He alone can enable us.

And what shall I say unto those who are not born again? What shall I say to

those unhappy characters, for such they are, however little aware of their real situation, on whose hearts this great change has never yet passed ?

This would I say—"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." I allow that you have not one claim to the mercy—I allow that you have no power to communicate the mercy to your own souls—but I tell you that without it you perish—that without it you can never be happy, you can never be saved—that without it, to you heaven would be no heaven, yea, would be nothing but a place of unutterable misery.

But I also tell you that Jesus is exalted as much to give repentance, as forgiveness of sins. Go then, and place yourselves at His feet—go, and throw yourselves beneath His cross—go, and take your hard and insensible heart, and ask him to break it, whom no one really asketh in vain.

CHAPTER III

THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, AS VIEWED NEGATIVELY, IN THE MORTIFICA- TION OF SIN.

Rom. i. 4.—The Spirit of Holiness.

THE farther consideration of our subject leads us to take that view of holiness which is developed *in the Mortification of sin, in the hearts of the people of God.* This, although it be strictly speaking, the negative side of the question before us, yet is it of the very utmost importance.

This is that occupation, that business of life, to which, every day, every hour, every moment of his existence, calls the saint of God. *It is not a thing over and done, a thing accomplished and past, as in regeneration.* It is an ever-present object ; “ If

ye," says the apostle, "*do* mortify the deeds of the body," those "members" upon earth spoken of, Col. iii. 5, that "flesh, with its affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24, whence, as from a fountain, all the evil deeds of the body take their spring, if ye *do* this, which is *ever doing, never done*, till mortality shall be swallowed up of life, "ye shall live."

It is not a thing which others can do for the believer. It is his own act and deed. In this he is not, as *in regeneration*, merely passive and quiescent, in which he is only acted upon, and does nothing. The inspired witness declares, "If *ye*," ye yourselves, for yourselves, "mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

And yet is it that, to the accomplishment of which, mere human power, even the power of the regenerated soul, is in all respects in every degree inadequate. The power, the invincible power and energy of

the Holy Ghost is here essentially, indispensably necessary. As if to deny altogether, and for ever, the workings of self-endeavour, and every conceit of independent power, "if ye, through the Spirit," asserts the same divine record, "do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Behold then the subject matter before us. It is deeply and solemnly interesting, interesting in itself, but especially and above all interesting, as it bears upon ourselves, personally, and individually.

In treating of it, I would, *First*, consider the nature of Mortification, or wherein real Mortification of sin consists.

Secondly, I would point out the absolute necessity which exists for such Mortification.

Thirdly, I would endeavour to show in what way it is, that the Spirit of Holiness mortifies sin in us, or enables us to mortify sin.

And may your heart, and mine, dear reader, be influenced by that same Spirit, earnestly to desire an especial and lasting blessing from on high, that the subject may be to our souls full of life and light and power, that not only *some*, but *all* sin may be mortified in us, and by us, through the Spirit, and that we may yield ourselves wholly, and unreservedly to God through Jesus Christ.

With regard to the nature of Mortification of sin, it is of vast importance for us to have clear definitive views. I begin by remarking that real Mortification of sin is not a *mere sorrow for sin, however affecting and violent, for a season, such sorrow may be*. Many it is to be feared make shipwreck here, nor is this wonderful—here lies one of the unsuspected shoals of the great deceiver. Some individuals there are whose hearts are easily wrought upon, whose feelings are easily excited. In such, how extreme the danger of mistaking nature for

grace, and the meltings of sensibility for the godly sorrow, the real repentance of a contrite spirit. As their tears flow at the bidding of almost every circumstance of an affecting character, so, under some strong and pungent appeal, they will confess their sin, bewail their sin, and could we trust the excitement of mere animal feeling, would seem as if they abhorred their sin. And yet, the issue proves how little sin was ever truly mortified in their bosoms. My brethren, that which comes from God leads to God; but that which flows from nature issues in nothing, nothing that is spiritual, and holy, and good.

How great an influence can the *example* of others exert upon us, especially where by reason of rank, talent, affection, or any peculiarity in their relation towards us, they have a necessary weight in our estimation. The children of Judah, in the days of Josiah the king, were, to all outward ap-

pearance, deeply humbled, but it was only in appearance, when Josiah was dead, they soon returned to all their idolatries, 2 Chro. xxxvi. 14. Even the *selfish principle* can produce some sorrow for past sins—Esau wept, but it was for blessings forfeited more than for sins committed. He could see something indeed, of the effect of his sin, by reason of his own loss, but he knew nothing of sin's exceeding sinfulness, through any right view of God. There is a sorrow that "worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of," and there is a sorrow that "worketh death," 2 Cor. vii. 10. The Corinthians not only mourned for sin, but they *repented* of it. Many can weep for sin, sigh and groan for sin, feel wretched on account of it, and yet *not* repent, they can still love sin, live in sin, and at last die in sin.

True mortification does not consist in a partial alteration of conduct. Such altera-

tion may take place from a variety of motives, and not one of those motives be a spiritual one. The influence of such a preacher as was John the Baptist, must have had a strong natural effect upon the hearts of many of his hearers. That the natural feelings of Herod should have been excited thereby, is by no means a subject for wonder. In consequence of this, he heard John gladly and “did many things,” Mark vi. 20. The uneasiness of the natural conscience, roused from its lethargy by an awful unfolding of death and judgment, may for a time produce strong results ; it may, at least, awaken the slumbering sinner from his mid-day dream, till some opiate of the great deceiver shall once more lull him to repose. The power of affection may check, and the dread of consequence control. One passion, however stimulating in itself, may be a sedative to another passion—and one evil be checked

by another. But in this alteration of conduct thus produced, there are two things ever to be noted.—First, *a defect of right principle*, “there is no fear of God before their eyes,” Rom. iii. 18, and next, which is a necessary consequence of the other, *there is a defect as to the uniformity of operation*. The preacher may be admired by his hearers, they may sit before him as the people of God. They may listen to, and approve of what they hear; they may be affectionate and kind in their manner, and with their mouths may show *much love*. But some darling sin leads them captive and destroys them, Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. John may be followed, but Herodias must be kept, Mark vi. 17.

Still less is mortification of sin a mere diverting of sin into other channels than those in which it formerly flowed, a turning the current of some gross iniquity into one of a less daring, less open enormity. This

is no uncommon effect. The great master of evil finds it frequently suits his purpose to give the torrent of corruption a new direction and allot it a more gentle course. Conscience is thereby more easily quieted, the sinner more effectually deceived and destroyed. Cain goes from the murder of his brother to worldliness and to the building of cities. Simon Magus, from having been a sorcerer, would purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost—Judas left his old associates for Christ's disciples. Many a gross slave of the world, becomes a worldly professor of the Gospel. Carelessness is exchanged for a formal self-righteousness, and avowed ungodliness for that which conceals itself under the name of religion.

All this is far removed from any real mortification of sin. Neither trace we this hallowed principle, even in some occasional conquest over sin itself. Mere natural motives, arising from the sting of conscience,

the dread of consequences in this world, or some fearful anticipation of what may be in the next, the loss of enjoyment in the things themselves, from tedium, satiety, or disgust, or the weakened powers of body and of mind, and even from the sober convictions of the natural judgment itself, all these, or any one of them, may, for a time, present some check to some of those sins, which once swept like a torrent over the whole man. But the check is only for a little moment, the barrier is found weak and impotent. Some mighty temptation, driven forward by time and circumstance, and the craft and power of the great deceiver, comes like a whirlwind against it. Its resistance is but for a moment. The stream of corruption mingles its force with the violence of some temptation, and together they rush, headlong and impetuous, sweeping every thing before them, till all is devastation and ruin. "The dog is

turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Pet. ii. 22.

What then is true mortification of sin, and wherein does it consist? *It is a dethroning of sin in the soul.* By this, I do not mean, as is its proper sense, the primary removal of sin from its throne. This was done in Regeneration. By a dethroning of sin, I here understand, in its proper sense, that act of the Holy Spirit in the soul, whereby sin is prevented from recovering its former possession of the throne, and from an actual rule in the affections and conduct. In this sense, mortification is a dethroning of sin, I mean of sin, not merely as an act, but as a principle.

When I assert this, I am far from meaning that this noxious hateful principle of evil does not still abide in, vex and continually harass the children of God, does not too often lead them to acts unworthy

of their high calling—injurious to their real happiness. The scriptures no where warrant the supposition that this evil principle is *eradicated* or *destroyed* in the militant state of the Church upon earth. But while the idea of its *eradication* and *destruction* is a fond and unscriptural fancy, replete with danger of self-elation on the one hand, and of utter despair on the other, yet its positive *dethroning* in the soul of every true believer is every where maintained in the sacred volume. It is true, it fighteth hard for the mastery, and fighteth to the last, warring against the soul, 1 Pet. ii. 11. The most aged combatant in this ceaseless struggle is sensible of his utter need of continual aid from above, to enable him to contend against this strong and potent enemy, no less than the youngest—less did I say? He feels far more conscious of a deeper necessity than the inexperienced soldier can ever feel. He knoweth

more of its deadly evil, of its subtlety, its subterfuges, its power, its tendencies, and therefore dreads it more. This induces him more habitually to betake himself, in the simplicity of his confidence and deep sense of his entire impotency, to the Strong alone for strength. But though sin struggles, and will continue to struggle, even to the end, though it not only contends, but wounds, not only wounds, but sometimes, alas, *for a time*, prevails in those who really love and fear God, yet possession of the throne it cannot gain. Such is the nature of that covenant of grace “ordered in all things and sure,” such is the abundance of its provisions, such the security which it affords, that sin shall never again dwell upon the throne of the renewed man’s heart, shall never reign, rule, recover its former dominion there. “I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me,” Jer. xxxii. 40. “Sin

shall not have dominion over you," Rom. vi. 14.

Mortification of sin implies its crucifixion.

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24. By this we are to understand not merely a past but also a present act, as is clear from a comparison of this passage with that of Rom. vi. 6, "our old man is crucified with Him." This crucifixion of sin denotes more than the previous definition. Sin is hereby not only deprived of dominion, but dealt with as a traitor, a rebel, an enemy, a condemned criminal. It is nailed to the cross, as a thing cast out, proscribed, abhorred, yea, it is nailed to the cross of the Son of God, thereby receiving its deadliest wounds, and deepest humiliation. There it hangs, striving and writhing like one accursed of God, and of those who partake of his image. 'Its destruction is absolutely determined. It is

weakened, confined, and in a disgraced, suffering and dying state, though it yet lives and struggles for life, and even for liberty and victory. Nor is there the least intention in the believer or His gracious Lord, to release the crucified rebel.'

But *mortification of sin includes some real conquest over sin*. It is not only a struggle with that which is evil, there is some real *success* in the struggle—not only a fight, but in some real sense, a *victory*. The palm is not awarded to the mere combatant, "but to him that overcometh," Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26, iii. 5, 12, 21. Defective as the victory may be, partial as the success, complete only till faith be lost in sight, and hope in certainty; yet it is true, that even on earth, does the believer, as kept by the power of God, achieve real mastery over the sin that dwelleth in him, real conquest over the power of corruption. This is not the mere par-

tial victory to which I have before alluded, and which, as I then remarked, may exist where there is no real mortification of sin. This is not a mere temporary check to some of the grosser exhibitions of indwelling depravity. The believer hates sin, as sin, he hates all sin, and longs to be free from it, *because it is sin*. He daily discovers the deadly foe with whom he has to contend, yea, oftentimes discovers him where he little expected the discovery. Love, a sense of solemn obligation, and the dread of consequences, principles in the new nature, drawn forth by the indwelling Spirit, all lead him on to the battle. It is a long and wearisome fight. Sometimes he is worsted, sometimes wounded, fainting, cast down, and ready to die. Long possession of the ground on the part of his enemy, deep cunning and mighty power, all aided and abetted by the great mover of the fray, Satan, the prince of darkness,

make the struggle always painful, sometimes dreadful. The spirit often sinks at the constant repetition of the same contest with the same enemy, at the prospect of having the same ground to re-tread, the same difficulties to re-conquer. Vantage ground is often given to the foe through supineness, lethargy, unbelief, and want of prayer. Distrust sometimes weakens the believer on the one hand, and self-trust on the other. In the path of duty he often slips through carelessness, in the reign of temptation he often sleeps through fancied security. And yet, notwithstanding all this, he is on the whole *a conqueror*. Greater is He that is in him, than he that is in the world. Christ is the life of his soul, Col. iii. 4. God is his God, and dwelleth in him, and walketh in him, 2 Cor. vi. 16. He is the temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19. Here is the true secret of his victory. The indwelling Spirit braces the

sinews of the new man, and strengthens him for the mighty conflict. Through this is it, that even the weakest, the feeblest, the most tried and tempted of God's people on earth, are described as conquerors. "Now ye also put off *all these*, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."—"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds."—"Ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."—"Being made free from sin," as to its ruling, reigning, tyrannizing power, "and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life," Col. iii. 8, 9, Rom. vi. 17, 22.*

* Such being the language of God's sacred word, I would with all meekness and love suggest, whether the language adopted by some true saints of God be not on the whole injudicious, and therefore to be avoided. They speak of themselves otherwise than the un-

Such then is the nature of true mortification of sin. It is a dethroning, a crucifixion of sin, and on the whole, real conquest over it.

Let us consider *secondly* the *Necessity* of such mortification.

erring standard of truth describes the general character of the people of God. In their confessions, they seem to underrate the work of the Holy Spirit within them, to confine it to a mere perception of sin's sinfulness, and a Saviour's atoning sacrifice, and though they mean not so, by inference to deny the existence of that great change of heart, and renovation of character, which it is the very glory of the Spirit of Jesus to effect, I mean such expressions as these : believers are '*nothing but sin,*' '*rebels,*' '*their lives one course of sin,*' '*one sin,*' '*one mass of sin,*' '*nothing but rebellion,*' '*having as many evil tempers as Satan himself,*' all which phrases, although to be found in the writings of good and holy men, and often used by many of God's people, of tender conscience, and under the deep feeling of their own sinfulness, yet are they, I humbly conceive, *untrue* in fact, and *hurtful* in tendency. Under the strong and heavy pressure of indwelling corruption, the saint of God groans, being burthened, and in this state he is tempted to overlook that mighty change which God

It is necessary, because God declares it to be so. “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” As much as if the Apostle said to them,—‘ I know that ye profess to be the disciples of Christ, the servants of the Most High God, to have no hope but in that name which is above every name—I know

has wrought within him. But it is a temptation, and like every other temptation to be felt as such. I am aware, in some degree painfully aware, how, under the hidings of God’s face, and the withdrawalment of the more sensible influence of His Holy Spirit, the child of God can see little more than the corruption of his nature. All seems blank, and dark, and cheerless within him. The graces of the Spirit, like lilies of the valley, droop under the chilling influence, and the evils of his nature like beasts of the forest, roam abroad. It is only in God’s light we can see light. But then this is a state of temporary darkness, and it is the effect of it, as in natural darkness, that objects are *misapprehended*. Any description of a child of God, otherwise than the word of God gives us, any expressions which seem to aver that sin is *on the whole* the conqueror, the king,

that for that name's sake ye have borne reproach, contumely, and scorn—I know that ye have exposed yourselves to dangers, to imprisonment, and even to death—but still I warn you, as the minister of an holy gospel I warn you, as an apostle of Jesus Christ I admonish you, if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, if sin be un-

the uncrucified rebel, is the very consequence of this misapprehension, and when it is not felt to be so, but is regarded as the true state of the case, it has an injurious tendency. Like every other departure from God's word, it is, and must be, attended with evil. It leads to a tacit sort of conviction that there is more power in sin to reign than in the Spirit of Christ to dethrone, gives a sort of omnipotency to corruption, undervalues the efficacy of the sceptre of Immanuel's grace in the hearts of His people, leads indirectly to an excuse for passive lying under, instead of an active rising above the weight of indwelling sin, and thereby promotes the evil which it deplores, engenders a spirit of hopelessness in prayer, for why should I continue to pray for much, when upon this supposition I have received so little, nor is it without some tendency to confound the godly and the ungodly, and thereby to encourage sin.

mortified, unsubdued, your profession is vain, your hope is vain, and dying so, ye shall perish everlastingly. Of little importance is it, *what* ye are, and *who* ye are, whether in Cæsar's household, Phil. iv. 22, or obscure and unknown, whether learned or unlearned, whether rich or poor, this one thing I declare, *unmortified sin must issue in eternal death.*"

Oh, what a solemn admonition is this to those who may be reading these words at this moment ! May I not imagine that some, that many whose eye shall rest on this page, may be wholly strangers at this very instant, to the true evil of sin, strangers to God, strangers to themselves, strangers to the deadly plague within, strangers therefore to the only remedy. Never do I so feel the solemnity of preaching as when I picture to myself a man coming within the walls of the sanctuary, week after week, month after month, year after year, with

his bible in his hand, his hymn book in his hand, the gospel in his lips, and unmortified sin in the heart, the outward appearance fair to look upon, but a canker-worm in the core—indulging his sin, living in his sin, dead in his sin, deceiving others, deceived himself. The thought is sometimes so fearful, that I feel scarcely able to proceed ! Outward enemies to God present an awful spectacle, but with a name to live, and yet dead, with a profession of friendship, and yet an enemy, how awfully awful ! And who *are enemies* if these are not ? The apostle himself declares that such characters are *the enemies* of Christ, Phil. iii. 18, 19.

Dear reader, it is an affecting sight to see another die—to see his last gasp—to listen to the last accents of his voice—to hear the last heaving sigh—to watch the last gleam of life fade from the fixed, glazed eye—'tis a thrilling touch when we feel

the cheek, cold as marble, and grasp the hand, now stiff and motionless.

Especially so is it, when, though we know that he has heard the gospel of grace, attended the means of grace, and sometimes mixed with the heirs of grace, yet we know not his real state and condition of soul before God. We thus reflect—"the outward means, whatever they may have been to thee, are now closed and gone for ever—no more church, nor chapel now, nor reading of the word now—nor joining with those that pray now—no more warnings, nor rebukes, nor chastisements, nor secret corrections now—*all are at an end.*" But oh! how unspeakably more awful and affecting is it, if not only there be no evidence that satisfies, as to his being a saint of God, but there be all evidence to the contrary. The death of the body is fearful for nature to behold, but how unutterably more terrible is the sight of one dead in

trespasses and sins, passing, in that state, into the boundless regions of eternity !

Remember, poor thoughtless, Christless sinner, spiritual death is but the prelude to eternal death. 'Tis a part and parcel of it. And what is *thy* state ? Unmortified sin reigns in thine heart. The light of heaven is come into the world, but thou hatest the light, neither comest to the light, because thy deeds are evil, and being evil, are reproved by the light, Joh. iii. 18, 19. It is not that thou sayest that religion is nothing worth, this may not be Satan's delusion over thee, but it is that *the love of sin prevails in thine heart*. Thou doest it, thou livest in it, *because thou lovest it*. I do not charge thee with the commission of gross sin, this *may be* put to the account of many, but it *may not be* to thine, thy life may be fair and moral. Yet *this* I charge thee with—*the love of sin*. This is thy shame—may it become thy sorrow. Go on as

thou art, thou art lost. “*If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.*” “Seek the Lord, while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near,” Is. lv. 6.—He alone can give the new heart, the right spirit—He alone can mortify thy sin. But remember, *sin unmortified is but the certain prelude to eternal death.*

The necessity of mortification of sin is seen in another point of view.

There is a necessity for such mortification in the nature of the case itself.

“The flesh *lusteth* against the spirit.” This it does of its own nature. As a spark *naturally* flieth upwards, so *morally* is it the nature of the flesh to resist the spirit. Though for the most part aided by external objects—though propelled forward by the great enemy of all holiness—yet *of itself*, and *in itself*, does it oppose that which is holy. As long as life is in our bodies, there will be life in the body of sin and

death. Nothing alters its nature—it may be dethroned, crucified, subdued, but its nature is always the same—always opposing the spirit—always *fleshly, earthly, sensual*, and *therefore it needs to be mortified always*. It is ever at work, never more so than when least suspected. The green sward giveth no notice of the viper beneath it, and therefore the more danger. ‘The deepest waters make the least noise.’ Never have we more cause to suspect sin, than when we least suspect it. It may change its ground of attack—it may change its outward appearance, but not its essential qualities. There are “youthful lusts,” 2 Tim. ii. 22, there are the signs of age—the rich have their temptations, 1 Tim. vi. 9,—the poor have theirs, Prov. xxx. 9, but the flesh remains essentially the same, *in all*. I will go one step farther and say, that that which is flesh in those who live the nearest to God, in whose hearts this

principle of evil is most subdued, is just the same and consequently just as bad, as in the most abandoned of men. *Hence the necessity of its being mortified ever.*

Again, it is the very principle of sin that it ever aims, as Dr. Owen finely observes, “*at the very uttermost,*” and *strives to do the worst.* The beginnings of evil may be small, but it grasps at the whole. It may urge but few claims, but it means to obtain every thing. It presents the fine edge of the wedge, but it intends to rend the knotted oak asunder. It is but a murmur, but it tends to atheism. It is but a look, but it purposes adultery. It is but an angry word, but it involves murder. It is but circumcision, but it leads to a departure from all the truths of grace, Gal. v. 3, 4. It is but a bow in the house of Rimmon, but it includes in it all the trimming principles of worldly conformity. Here then lies especially the necessity of mortifi-

fication, because every sin has in it the principle of all sin, and aims at the very uttermost. And hence we see why it is that where sin, all sin is not mortified, there can be no real progress in the divine life. For as one plank, started in the ship, as certainly sinks the vessel, as many, so one sin, indulged, unsubdued, unmortified, aiming 'as it does, at the very worst, involving as it does, all the evil principles of sin, is an effectual hindrance to the true mortification of *any one sin*.

This is a very solemn subject for serious thought, and deep humiliation. The real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ does not, I am aware, persist in the wilful indulgence, in the allowed practice of known transgression. Were it so, sin *would have* dominion over him, contrary to Rom. vi. 14. But, notwithstanding this, such is the darkening, deceiving tendency of indwelling corruption, and so frequently does

it impede our real sight of spiritual objects, that the true tendency of some of our cherished principles, the true nature of some of our habitual practices are only *very partially* discovered. And yet, while there is but a *partial* discovery of the evil, there is *some* discovery, and this leaves us without excuse. We are convinced in a degree that all is not right, that such principles, such practices are not pleasing to God, but the true perception of their real sinfulness is not deeply felt. This leads to a partial indulgence of the things, for which we cannot, but as before God, condemn ourselves. Conscience assumes not its right office, and well is it, if this tampering with the enemy, lead not to his farther advances. Thus is it, alas, with many, it is to be feared very many, of even real though unhealthy Christians. And hence is it that they make so little real advance. Nor is it otherwise, till by the pressure of some

heavy affliction, or by the approach of death itself, the Spirit rouses them from their lethargy. Till then, some omission of what they believe to be their duty, some commission of what they know to be wrong, is still in a sense persisted in. Till then sin is in a sense indulged in, is not really mortified. Thus do they go on, year after year, lamenting their leanness, their weakness, their little vigour in their walk with God. The enemy too frequently prevails in other quarters, but *here* lies the seat of the evil.

Thus does an holy, faithful, and gracious God chasten the child whom he loves, when that child walks not in strict uprightness before Him. Thus does He give him practical, experimental proof of the defectiveness of that principle which aims not at the universal mortification of all detected evil, and show him that as all sin aims at the worst, so he must, through

grace, aim at the mortifying of all sin. The men of Ai prevail because Achan is suffered to remain in the camp, Josh. vii.

This leads me, *Thirdly, to endeavour to point out how, and in what way, and by what means, the Holy Spirit mortifies sin in us, or enable us to mortify sin.* And here I need not again enlarge on that primary act of the Holy Spirit, in the mortification of sin, displayed in the implanting of a new and divine nature in the soul. I need not now insist on those real and spiritual discoveries of sin, which are produced through the first application of God's most holy law, nor those revelations of grace and mercy which are made to the soul in the unfolding of His gospel. These things have been in some sense discussed. I would therefore confine the attention of my hearers to that mode of operation, which the Holy Spirit ordinarily pursues in the hearts of those who have been convinced

of sin, and who have, through grace, received Christ, in order to the continual mortification of sin in their hearts.

And, *first, the Holy Spirit mortifies sin in us by unfolding deeper discoveries of the real evil of sin.* He shows believers its exceeding sinfulness, as committed against God. And in order to this, He reveals the character of Him against whom the sin is committed. He unfolds Him, not only as a God of holiness and justice, a long-suffering and a faithful God, but especially, and above all, as a God of tender mercy, rich grace, boundless goodness, and infinite love—one that gave His Son to be incarnate for them, to live for them, and at last to die for them; a loving Father, who chose them in his Son, and gave them to his Son, who called them by His mere grace, who bears with them, notwithstanding all their departures from Him, and sins against Him, justifies them freely,

pardons, sanctifies, and at last glorifies. How hateful, how exceeding hateful does their sin then appear to them, when they look at it as committed against such a God as this!—"Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," Ps. li. 4, is now the contrite language of their hearts.

The goodness of God thus leadeth them effectually to repentance. Sin is more deeply mortified in them. In the light of a Father's countenance they see its exceeding blackness and deformity—they now perceive the mote, where before they could not discern the beam. His forgiveness leaves them without the desire of forgiving themselves. As the publican they smote upon their breasts, but as the pardoned prodigal they loathe themselves in dust and ashes. A clearer sight of God gives them a clearer perception of that which offends God, "I have heard of

Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself," Job xlii. 5, 6, is now the expression of their inmost souls.

He shows to them sin's exceeding misery, as it relates to themselves. He makes them sensible what sad and peace destroying consequences it produces in their own hearts—of what a miserable offspring it is the unhappy origin,—that *sin is the parent of sorrow*. He unfolds its real nature by its certain tendencies—traces out the cause in its effects—displays the bitterness of the source, by the bitterness of the streams that flow from it. In the school of experience does He embitter sin—here especially does the Spirit of holiness mortify sin in the people of God. Let not the timid, abased saint forget this. It is not sin, dear reader, that can show thee what sin is. It is the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit himself to make thee know what

good thou hast lost, what evils thou hast found, in transgression. True remorse, holy regret, deep unfeigned godly sorrow, issuing in real repentance for commissions of evil never to be undone, for omissions of opportunities of good never to be recalled, are the blessed effect of His inward power. Thou art learning, it may be, how sin leads to sin—how one sin leads to another, and that to misery—how carelessness has led to coldness, coldness to insensibility, and now thy soul is in heaviness. 'Tis a painful but a wholesome discipline. They are humiliating but profitable lessons. Be deeply humbled, yet, be not discouraged; all that the Spirit does in thee is in love. He reproveth but to instruct. He woundeth but to heal. He bringeth thee down, to lift thee up again. They that sow in such tears shall reap in joy. They that so mourn shall be comforted. Be deeply humbled—yet remem-

ber, He detects this and that sin in thee, and gives thee pang and sorrow of heart, not in order to grieve thee and make thee wretched, but to wean thy soul from all sin ; it may be to bring before thine eyes something for which thou hast *never mourned*, some latent evil, some unsuspected principle of departure from God, for which thou hast never grieved, concealed from thy sight, and therefore unmortified in thy heart. This is one material of the Lord's refining fire—He chastens sin with sin, in other words, makes sin its own chastisement. As in the case of Hezekiah, He takes off his hand from thy corruption, leaves thee in a measure to thyself, that thou mayest discover some root of bitterness, it may be, some concealed worldliness shut up in thy inmost bosom. Remember, my brother, while anguish for *some of those effects of sin* which concern ourselves, may be, and often

is felt by many who are living afar off from God, yet anguish *for sin itself*, as an evil against God, evil in thy sight, because evil in His sight, is the peculiar of His children, and the work of His Spirit. Thus does He mortify sin in them, and cause them, in the school of humiliating self knowledge, to feel that not only is it an *evil*, but a *bitter* thing to depart from the living God, Jer. ii. 19.

But in a very peculiar manner does the Holy Spirit mortify sin in us, by farther discoveries of Christ. There is an inexhaustible fulness, treasured up by God the Father, out of his own gracious and loving heart, in the Son of His love, in behalf of His church and people. In Him is *all* fulness, Col. i. 19. There is a fulness of merit in His incarnation,—a fulness of satisfaction in His atonement—a fulness of justification in His righteousness—a fulness of grace to mortify all sin. And all

this the Eternal Spirit reveals to us by His own immediate power, *in order to the mortifying of our sin.*

What soul-abasing views are connected with a closer sight, a more realizing apprehension of *the cross of Christ*—what pungent convictions of sin's evil arise in consequence of them !

And must the Son of God become the Son of man, that they, who are “by nature children of wrath even as others,” Eph. ii. 3, might become the sons of God? Must God, the Eternal God, the High and Lofty one, stoop so low, as to become incarnate, and that for *sinners*, for *me*, for *me* a sinner, a poor worthless sinner? To save me from eternal woe, must the Son of man suffer, agonize, and die, die in my stead, die for my sins, die an accursed death? Ah, Lord, what must sin be, what must *my* sin be! How little have I thought of it,

how little have I mourned for it, how still less have I hated it as I ought to have hated it! Lord how vile, how unutterably vile am I! And is *this the return* that I have made, exclaims the poor, humbled, abased, contrite soul, when it reflects on some instances of transgression against light and love, against rebukes, against restorings, against God himself? Did the Lord deserve *this* at my hands? Oh, base ingratitude! Oh, hated sin! Dost thou forgive it, Father of my mercies? This only makes it more hateful still. Never, never, can I forgive myself. Thus does a deeper mortification of sin take place, as closer views of the cross of the Son of God are developed to the mind. It is ever in the light of the cross, we see most of sin's exceeding sinfulness. Nor is this all. The very discovery which the Holy Spirit makes of all *that fulness of grace* for the

subduing of sin, which is treasured up in the Son of God, has a tendency to produce the same effect. As hopelessness leads to the commission of sin, Jer. xviii. 12, so the very principle of hope tends to its mortification. So found the prodigal, "I will arise and go unto my Father, though I am unworthy to be called a servant, much more a child, yet there is bread even for *me*, poor prodigal though that I am, bread enough and to spare. Though sin has cast me down and wounded me sorely, though I am weak and worthless and poor and needy, still Christ is the same, His fulness of grace the same, sufficient still for all my need, and He as ready as ever to impart it. Yes, there is corn in Egypt, though all around is famine. The river that maketh glad is still full, full to the brim. It has not sunk an hair's breadth, though thousands and millions have slaked *their* thirst therein.

What is the effect on the soul? What are the consequences that arise? Most blessed, most delightful. Humble, holy, peaceful *hope* is there—and lively *faith*, its holy parent is there—and ardent *love* is there—and there is filial and lowly *repentance*, while *self-abasement*, and *tenderness of conscience*, and *patient diligence*, and *grateful obedience* follow in their train.

Thus does the Holy Spirit mortify sin—He testifies of Jesus—reveals Jesus—glorifies Jesus in the hearts of them that believe—and thus giving the new nature its true spiritual food and sustenance, He draws out its graces, and thus enables the believer to mortify all that stands opposed to it.

Nor only this. Various are the means which He employs for this purpose; *reading the word of God*, frequent meditation on it, whereby it may “dwell in the heart

richly in all wisdom," *occasional retirement* from surrounding objects, as opportunity is given. Sometimes he makes *fasting* as a means to this end. But one thing he renders of an indispensable necessity—*self-examination, self-judging, and sincere upright confession of sin*. It is by these He searches the spirit, and tries the reins. It is by these he keeps the heart honest—endears the cross, and mortifies all iniquity.

Who can declare the blessings which He has made of the *bitter cup of affliction* for this very end! Oh, how many poor weary pilgrims in this vale of tears, who have been drinking of that cup, year after year, and all the year, to whom trouble after trouble has been administered, sorrow after sorrow has been sent, will have to confess in Heaven, yea upon earth may be led to see it, that such bitters were of an

essential necessity to wean them from the seducements of the world, and “the pleasures of sin,” that in this school of painful experience were they to learn, and through tender mercy, they did learn the evils of their own heart, the deceitfulness of sin, and were led to its deeper mortification in their temper, and spirit and life.

Lastly, *The Holy Spirit mortifies sin by actually leading the believer to a throne of mercy for fresh communications of that grace which the Father has treasured up in His Son, and by an actual communication of that grace.*

The very act of real prayer, independently of what it afterwards may receive, is in itself a great means of mortifying sin. There is in it not only a diverting of the mind from that which is sinful to the contemplation of the most holy of all objects, but there is in all real prayer, an exercise of repentance, faith, hope, and dependence

on God, which cannot but have a tendency to mortify the power of corruption.

And then there is *the result*, and the *blessed effect of such prayer*, namely the actual communication of grace, by the Holy Spirit, out of the fulness that is in Christ, even grace to help in the hour of need. By this He actually strengthens the new man, gives greater energy to all the actings of the new nature, and not only supports but invigorates them. Who can declare the holy effects of only five minutes real prayer with God, in blunting the edge of temptation, and in weakening the strength of sin?

On these points, had I dwelt less on other subjects connected with this interesting discussion, I might well enlarge. I trust, however, enough has been adduced to give some clear and lucid view to my readers, as to what the Scriptures declare concerning the nature and necessity of the

mortification of sin, and of the mode of the Spirit's operation therein. I trust, also, enough has been said, under the Divine blessing, to convince the believer in Jesus Christ of the exceeding, yea, unutterable importance of the thing itself, as it bears upon his own state and condition.

Can the believer in a crucified Saviour stand in need of any additional arguments to convince him that *sin, all sin*, must be mortified in him? I might appeal to him in behalf of the world around him, and say to him, **FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS**, mortify the sin that is in thee. Nay, disdain not the motive, though it be not the highest which ought to animate thee, the most exalted by which thou oughtest to be influenced. It is a motive, though a lower one. It is a *scriptural* motive, Rom. ii. 24, therefore despise it not.

The eyes of men are upon thee. They watch thee, and watch thee narrowly.

Thou hast, it may be, children dependent upon thee. Perhaps thou hast servants that look up to thee--thou hast possibly brothers, sisters, yet in their sins. I am supposing but a probable case, in imagining that thou hast much necessary intercourse with the men of the world around thee. Remember, my brother, their eyes are upon thee; they watch thy *temper*, thy *spirit*, thy *words*, thy *principles*, thy *practice*. As to thy spiritual experience, conflicts, and joys, the secret motives which influence: of this, of course, they know nothing, they care nothing. That the Bible should be often in thy hand, they expect. That thou shouldest be regular in attendance upon the forms of worship, this they look for. They are not surprised at religious conversation; they do not wonder that thine acquaintance should be of the same character with thyself. But that for which they look, and they have a right to look

for it, is *mortification of sin*. Words are but light feathers with them—but principles and actions have weight, Math. v. 16, even with that world, which knows nothing of the secret spring from which they take their rise. If they remark, in thee, *flippancy, lightness, and want of due reverence* for things sacred and holy—what conclusion do they draw? What *must* they draw! Thou mayest call it cheerfulness—a desire not to appear morose—a yielding, in order to prevail. They call it not so—they esteem it not so. Art thou amazed, if I say, their balance it may be, is more just than thine. If they discern any yielding to the corrupt conduct of a corrupt world, any trimming policy, any surrender of right principle, any want of strict integrity, any dereliction of honest and honourable motive—if they note any aberrations from truth, any indulgence of unhallowed temper—if they see thee severe upon those

that differ in opinion from thyself—if they remark thee austere, harsh and selfish—What deduction do they draw? These are the things that speak, and they speak loudly.

And how, my brother, does it commend that Gospel to them, when they see thee meek and lowly, penitent, and gentle—kind to those around thee—benevolent, self-denying, returning good for evil—blessing for cursing—giving up thine own interest; yea, trampling it under foot, when the interest of thy Lord is concerned and demands it—when thine integrity, thine honesty, the rectitude of thy principles stand forth, and are, as an epistle, known and read of all men. Thus, the saint of God may have a good report of those that are without, 1 Tim. iii. 7, and holiness of conduct may prevail, in the absence of all outward means, 1 Pet. iii. 1.

And even, where thou hast been, through

the Spirit, thus enabled to mortify sin ; yet, who shall say, my brother, what influence may not yet be exerted, in a far greater degree, over those around thee, thy family, the circle of thine acquaintance, yea, thy whole neighbourhood, as far as thine influence can reach, were sin still more and more mortified in thee, were the *subduing*, the *crucifixion*, the *dethroning* of the old man so apparent, so visible, so undeniable, were thy sanctity, thy humility, thy benevolence, thy self-denial, thy moral courage, so made manifest to the consciences of all who love and fear God, that they could not but glorify God on thy behalf ? Oh ! how, under God, and through His most gracious blessing, might it be a means of awakening some that slumber in His ways—of strengthening the weak, of encouraging the timid—of cheering, animating, reproving, humbling, sanctifying, purifying—were this the blessed effect. Even

for the sake of others pray, seek—and, in the strength of the Lord, earnestly endeavour to mortify all sin.

But I appeal to a higher motive. **FOR THINE OWN sake** do this. I call this a higher motive, for so says the word of God, Acts xx. 28, 1 Tim. iv. 16.

Dost thou desire, my brother, to remain even where thou now art, to suffer no declensions in the Divine life—to undergo no damage, not to lose ground, not to be carried down the stream—that stream that runs so swiftly, flows so strongly? Then *mortify all sin*. Any parley with the enemy, any indulged, any unmortified sin, whatever it may be, weakens the energy of the new nature, and strengthens the power of temptation. It encourages the tempter, and diminishes the desire of resistance. Many, my brother, be assured, are learning this painful and distressing lesson, they are not, as they once were. There is not

that light in the understanding. There is not that tenderness in the conscience, there is not that love in the affections, which once marked their Christian character. They can do many things—many things which they know to be wrong—and yet not mourn for it. They can leave many things undone, which they know to be right, and yet not mourn. It was not so once. There was a time, when, if secret prayer were slighted, they were wretched, if the reading of the word were neglected, they were wretched—if every opportunity of receiving spiritual good were not embraced—if any conformity to the world, if the least aberration from spiritual uprightness were yielded to, they were miserable. Time was once *made* for waiting upon God—now, when *it is given*, the opportunity *passes by*. The cross was once *taken up*; now, when the Master himself lays it upon the shoulder, they can *cast it aside*. Close

preaching, close talking, and close communion with God's most spiritual saints, were once prized and sought after, now they offend. The maxims of the world displease not as formerly—they do not hate sin as once. In other words they are walking at a distance from God. But what was the origin of all this? Whence did all these polluted streams arise? *From unmortified sin.*

Am I addressing one who is himself conscious of the truth of the remark? It may be so. Some heart may be aching as the age traces this page. Some conscience may be smitten as the mournful picture is presented. 'This is *my* case, *my* circumstance, *my* declension, *my* fall, *my* misery. See then the solemn truth. Sin leads to sin.' Nor only sinfulness of principle leads to sin in practice, but one act of sin, one indulgence prepares the way for a second. To keep even our present

situation in the divine life, to remain even where we are, sin, *all* sin must be mortified. No wonder such a condition admits of no *progress*, it does not even allow men to be *stationary*. *For your own sakes, as well as for the sake of others,—seek, in a dependence on divine grace, to mortify all sin.*

But I have a more solemn appeal, a far higher motive still, a motive compared with which, all other motives sink into inferiority. *It is FOR THE HONOUR OF GOD that his people mortify sin.* This is the great, the most exalted of all principles. Believers are God's witnesses upon earth. They are His lights in the midst of a world of darkness, not only for the purpose of dispersing His truth, but of reflecting His image upon earth. Having received the light of life, truth, and holiness, they, who once were darkness, are now to disperse that light, and shine as

lights in the world, Eph. v. 8, Phil. ii. 13. And as they have light by communication from the Sun of righteousness, Song, vi. 10, so are they to diffuse that light all around, and by righteousness, to reflect His image among men.

As a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," they are to show forth his virtues by reflection. The church is compared to the moon, not only because she derives light from Christ the Sun of righteousness, but, because she reflects back again the light which she has received from Him. Bear then a fair testimony for God in the midst of a world of darkness. Is there any thing that casts a greater dimness upon the true lustre of the gospel in the eyes of others than the inconsistencies of God's people? Let not that gospel be wounded through you.

Forget not, my brother, this high, this

holy calling. What is the true concern, the very business, and noblest occupation of thy life? To show forth the praises of Him who hath called thee out of darkness into marvellous light, 1 Pet. ii. 9, to show forth His praises, *His virtues*, (see margin) to reflect His very character, by holiness, by purity, by long-suffering, by patience, by love, so that others may see a little of what God is *through thee*. The Son of God "who is the Image" of God, the visible Image "of the invisible God," Col. i. 15. "His express image," Heb. i. 3, by the spotless sanctity of His life, in obeying every precept of God's most righteous law, and by the righteous perfection of His death, in suffering the penalty of that law, thereby made the fullest discovery, gave incomparably the most glorious manifestation of God's most perfect character, which His creatures ever received. So are all the disciples of Christ, the saints of God,

His elect and called family on earth, renewed in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after the image of Him that created them, Eph. iv. 24, Col. iii. 10, commanded in their measure and degree, poor and feeble as it may be, to be His image and representation also. Hence others may say, how inconceivably, how unutterably good must that God be, whose very reflection, dim and faint as it is, is so lovely.

There are some individuals, my brother, with whom one can scarcely ever have intercourse, but one seems to discern something of their blessed Master in them—something of His meekness, tenderness, humility, and love—something of His self denial, patience, submission—something of His purity, courage, and zeal, and holy confidence in God. There are some with whom we seldom mingle as we pass through life's pilgrimage, but we are ready

to say of them—this is a man of God, a man of prayer, a man of holiness—I know where he has lately been. He has been at a throne of grace—he has been with God, and the savour of His name is upon him. Can we describe the weight, the influence, the moral importance which such an individual possesses? Impossible! His counsel and advice, his admonitions, his cautions, his encouragements, above all, his example, and his prayers are so many channels, through which a gracious God conveys unutterable blessings to our souls.

But, I must now conclude.

With two cautions will I close the subject.

Beware of self dependence, in the pursuit of this important, this essentially important object, the mortification of thy sin. Satan and sin are far too strong for all the puny efforts of self-endeavour, and be assured, no small part of this necessary act of mor-

tification consists in the perpetual crucifixion of that principle of *self*, which is so prone to lead us off from a simple dependence on the promises of a gracious, faithful, covenant God. There is, in a sense, an omnipotence in weakness. "When I am weak, then am I strong," 2 Cor. xii. 10. In order to real victory over sin, there must be a victory over self-reliance, which is a part of sin, and that truth must be experimentally taught us by the Holy Ghost, "without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. Leaning upon the Beloved is the only posture in which we travel out of the wilderness. For it is only as we are really instructed in this school, we shall ever be enabled to add, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." Phil. iv. 13.

Beware of turning the acknowledgment of an entire dependence upon the Spirit of God, into an occasion of sluggish indolence and careless inactivity.

This is not an unnecessary caution. We are ever prone to extremes, and this sad abuse of a most gracious truth is a most awful extreme. Some there are, who seem almost in their hearts to say, 'I mortify sin, as much as the Holy Ghost enables me.' If self-dependence is bad, this fearful sentiment is no better. Unmortified sin, according to this most perverted creed, is to be charged rather upon God, than upon the sinner. So says not the scripture. Heb. iv. 12, and so says not the believer.

The operations of the Holy Spirit are omnipotent, but he has opened certain channels by which He conveys the stream of life to our souls. The administration of grace stands indissolubly connected with our own diligence. May we be found in the *unwearied, prayerful, hopeful* use of each and all appointed means. Diligently waiting upon God, for the rich

communication of His grace, simply believing the truth of His promise, uprightly walking in the light we have, and sincerely honouring Him in our walk and conversation, the truth of His own words shall most certainly be realized in us, "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." "He giveth grace to the humble, yea more grace." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint," Prov. xiii. 4, James iv. 6, Is. xl. 31.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, AS VIEWED POSITIVELY, IN THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION.

Rom. i. 4.—The Spirit of Holiness.

HAVING considered the subject of Holiness in somewhat of a negative point of view, as developed in the mortification of sin, I shall now regard its farther progress in the soul, and endeavour to unfold some of its more positive effects, as seen in
SANCTIFICATION.

In the discussion of which, I would

First remark that all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are holy, and none others can be so.

Secondly, I would attempt to show what encouragements the word of God gives

communication of His grace, simply believing the truth of His promise, uprightly walking in the light we have, and sincerely honouring Him in our walk and conversation, the truth of His own words shall most certainly be realized in us, "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." "He giveth grace to the humble, yea more grace." "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint," Prov. xiii. 4, James iv. 6, Is. xl. 31.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, AS VIEWED POSITIVELY, IN THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION.

Rom. i. 4.—The Spirit of Holiness.

HAVING considered the subject of Holiness in somewhat of a negative point of view, as developed in the mortification of sin, I shall now regard its farther progress in the soul, and endeavour to unfold some of its more positive effects, as seen in SANCTIFICATION.

In the discussion of which, I would

First remark that all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are holy, and none others can be so.

Secondly, I would attempt to show what encouragements the word of God gives

those, who are sanctified, to expect *a growth in holiness.*

Thirdly, I shall endeavour to point out *in what way*, and *by what means* the Holy Spirit carries forward and advances the work of holiness in the soul.

And may He the Spirit of holiness graciously impart all that light of life, all that light of love to us, as may cause the truth to commend itself, not only to our understandings but also to our affections and consciences in the fear of God.

First, all true believers are holy and none others can be so, all others are unholy.

I am aware this will appear to some an assertion harsh and severe. They will esteem it a sentiment narrow and contracted, and one to the truth of which they can by no means submit. They think of the patriot who has toiled—of the hero who has bled for his country—of the philanthropists who has dispensed blessings all

around him, at the expense of property, comfort, health, and sometimes of life itself. They tell us of private benevolence, domestic attachment and affection, of the sympathies and kindness of those around us, point us to instances of integrity, honesty and uprightness of character, and ask us, Is not this holiness? Let the word of God give the answer, "without faith it is *impossible* to please God," Heb. xi. 6, which is as much as to say, none but believers *can* please *Him*, all others *do* not, *cannot*.

All others are unholy. My dear reader, I do not deny that in many who are strangers to real faith there may be things amiable, things lovely, and of good report. There may be integrity, courage, and, in the ordinary use of the word, self-denial. There may be much kindness, benevolent feeling and tender sympathy. One may remark in them soft and gentle tempers,

and admire it, and in some sense *love*, Mark x. 21; but after all, they who are strangers to Christ, are strangers to real holiness.

The principle of holy *fear* of God is not there, so says eternal truth, Rom. iii. 18. The principle of grateful *love* is not there, so He declares who cannot lie, Col. i. 21. And where the love and fear of God are not, there holiness can never be. Where is real humility, real repentance, and lowly confidence in God? Where is zeal for His glory, and abased gratitude for His mercies? These are tender plants that spring not up in nature's desert and dreary wilderness.

What is that spirit of independence which will not submit to the sovereign authority of God *in His law*? when time and talents, and rank and comforts, and property and life itself are all claimed, and justly claimed as His, proudly, though

tacitly, replies, "who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" Ex. v. 2.

What is that lofty reliance upon its own reason, and powers and resources, which practically rejects all real reliance upon the power, the wisdom, the over-ruling *providence* of God, Hos. v. 13?

What is that temperature of mind that will not submit to the righteousness of God in *His gospel*, but rather than do it, will go about to establish its own wretched and contemptible righteousness, and labour to prop up the falling ruin, Rom. x. 3? All these are but the varied modifications of unholiness.

All others than believers are unholy. Augustine declared the best actions of the unregenerated to be but splendid sins, and what other verdict can truth pronounce? Their most promising deeds, are rather the product of habit, education, or instinctive feeling, than real principle, or, if

it be principle, it is not the principle which, denying all merit or ground of boasting in the creature, springs out of a sense of grateful, loving, adoring, allegiance to God. The centre of their circle is self, not God. Hence the fatal result. And till the central position be occupied by its rightful owner, God Himself, the tendencies of man's principles and actions can never be where they ought to be, can never produce *right* principles and actions.

All others than believers are unholy. Not only by nature strangers experimentally to real holiness, *but they do not even know what it is*, nor wherein it consists, nay more, the natural man *cannot* know it, 1 Cor. ii. 14. Of "that wisdom which is the fear of the Lord, that true understanding which consisteth in a departure from evil, he knoweth not the price," Job xxviii. He discerneth not its true nature, and therefore perceives not its real value. The man of the high-

est intellect has no natural perception of the principles of real sanctification.

It is only believers in Christ who are holy, and *all* who believe in him are so. Whatever their standing in the divine life, whatever their degree of faith, the scripture ever describes them as sanctified or holy persons. They who are the faithful in Christ Jesus are also the saints, Eph. i. 1, Col. i. 2. They have received Christ by faith. This sanctifies them. By faith also they live upon that fulness of grace, which is treasured up in Him for their sanctification, and by faith they are sanctified, receiving from him that grace which sanctifies.

There is a three-fold sanctification spoken of in sacred scripture. There is an outward designation of persons and things to an holy use, as in the legal covenant, Ex. xiii. 2, xxviii. 41, xxix. 27, 36. In this sense the word seems to be used,

Heb. x. 14. There is a sanctifying expiation by blood, Heb. xiii. 12. But, besides these, there is an *internal* sanctification, a communication of holy qualities to the soul, as requisites for the enjoyment of an holy God. As God the Father, out of His own free and unmerited love chose a people in Christ that they might be holy, Eph. i. 4—as God the Son, out of the riches of his own abundant grace, having become incarnate for this people, in that nature died in their stead, and for their sins, that they might be holy, Tit. ii. 14, so God the Eternal Spirit makes them holy, sanctifies this elect family, purifies them by implanting a new nature, enabling them in that new nature to mortify sin inwardly, and the deeds of the body outwardly, and carries on and advances this work of purification in their hearts and lives, tempers and conversation.

Thus writes the apostle Paul, “ God

hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit," 2 Thess. ii. 12. Thus also the apostle Peter, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. i. 2. In which last passage we have a distinguishing feature in the sanctification of which we speak, "*the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.*"

The people of God are a poor unworthy people, they have no ground of hope, but in Him who have died for others; they have no satisfaction to God's holy law to offer in any work wrought in them, or done by them. The only righteousness which can stand the test of God's justice, and they know it, is a righteousness out of themselves in another. The only refuge which can cover their heads in the storm and they feel it, is the finished work of

Him who died in their stead. Take the best, the holiest, the most watchful, the most prayerful, those who live the nearest to God, those who live the most beneath the cross, those who realize the most of the love of Christ and of God in their hearts, leading them to a filial, tender, loving fear of displeasing that Father who has so loved them—yet look at even these, as in themselves, and weigh all their zeal, all their love, all their humility, all their outward consistency and inward sanctity against the perfect purity, the spotless holiness, the entire spirituality of God's most holy law, and I am well aware, they "cannot answer him one of a thousand," Job, ix. 3. So thought Job, and so will all think, who know as much of their own hearts as Job knew. What said David? "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified," Ps. cxliii. 2, "if thou,

Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who can stand," Ps. cxxx. 3. What said Isaiah? "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts," Is. vi. 3. Thus do close views of God, and close acquaintance with the heart produce the deepest feeling of unworthiness. And yet bear ever in mind, that the people of God differ, *essentially* differ, from the world around them.

Sin is their grief, their shame, their burthen, holiness their aim, their object, their delight. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," "with the mind I myself serve the law of God," "to will is present with me," "the good I would," "the evil I would not," "I consent unto the law that it is good," "the law is holy, just and good." However let and impeded, however resisted and obstructed by indwelling corruption, yet is the holy prin-

ciple within them the ruling, reigning principle, "sin shall not have dominion over you," Rom. vi. 14. That faith which is of the operation of God, is that which purifieth the heart, Acts xv. 9, and which worketh by love, Gal. v. 6. As they are the temples of the Holy Ghost, He shines in them and speaks through them. Though in nothing are they as they ought to be, in nothing as they would be.—Though in every thing they come short, even in desire, yet are they in the midst of this *the saints of God*. They were once dead in sins, now are they alive to God, through Jesus Christ their Lord, Eph. ii. 1, 3, Rom. vi. 11. Once they were alienated from God, now they are reconciled, Col. i. 21. Once they were darkness, now are they light in the Lord, Eph. v. 8. Once they were taken captive by Satan at his will, 2 Tim. iii. 26, now are they led by the spirit of God, Rom. viii. 14. They

are the poor in spirit, the souls that mourn for sin and hunger for righteousness, the meek, the pure in heart, the merciful, the peace-makers, and they are and shall be blessed, Matt. v. 3—9.

“Let no man deceive you with vain words,” Eph. v. 6. “The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. vi. 9. Nature can talk well, know much, do much, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3, but it cannot inherit the kingdom. High notions can comport with low principles, an accurate creed with an unhumbled spirit, and a clear head with an unsubdued heart. Satan cares nought for all the attainments of unsanctified nature. Contrite spirits, broken hearts, cries for mercy and grace to help, looking to Jesus, longing desires for God and His holiness, these are the things which satan hates, and which Satan dreads, these are the things that prove the

ciple within them the ruling, reigning principle, "sin shall not have dominion over you," Rom. vi. 14. That faith which is of the operation of God, is that which purifieth the heart, Acts xv. 9, and which worketh by love, Gal. v. 6. As they are the temples of the Holy Ghost, He shines in them and speaks through them. Though in nothing are they as they ought to be, in nothing as they would be.—Though in every thing they come short, even in desire, yet are they in the midst of this *the saints of God*. They were once dead in sins, now are they alive to God, through Jesus Christ their Lord, Eph. ii. 1, 3, Rom. vi. 11. Once they were alienated from God, now they are reconciled, Col. i. 21. Once they were darkness, now are they light in the Lord, Eph. v. 8. Once they were taken captive by Satan at his will, 2 Tim. iii. 26, now are they led by the spirit of God, Rom. viii. 14. They

are the poor in spirit, the souls that mourn for sin and hunger for righteousness, the meek, the pure in heart, the merciful, the peace-makers, and they are and shall be blessed, Matt. v. 3—9.

“Let no man deceive you with vain words,” Eph. v. 6. “The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. vi. 9. Nature can talk well, know much, do much, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3, but it cannot inherit the kingdom. High notions can comport with low principles, an accurate creed with an unhumiliated spirit, and a clear head with an unsubdued heart. Satan cares nought for all the attainments of unsanctified nature. Contrite spirits, broken hearts, cries for mercy and grace to help, looking to Jesus, longing desires for God and His holiness, these are the things which Satan hates, and which Satan dreads, these are the things that prove the

sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost in the soul of man.

Here is faith, that in the midst of the strong and ceaseless fight, the fight with Satan and the world, and above all with inbred corruption, the worst of all its enemies, in the midst of conviction of unworthiness unutterable, rests with humble, holy confidence on Him who died to save.

Here is love, the daughter of faith—love to Him who gave His Son—love to Him who gave Himself to die, the just for the unjust, to redeem them from the curse of the law, being Himself made a curse for them, Gal. iii. 13, yea, to redeem them out of the world, from sin and Satan, and death and hell.

Here is fear, love's close associate and faithful friend, that timid grace which filled with holy distrust of itself, and resting in lowly confidence upon the arm of the

friend of sinners, walks softly, lest it displease the father, whom it loves.

Here is repentance, the tear that flows from the eye of faith, the godly sorrow, the filial grief that mourns for sin, embittered as the remembrance of it is by the consciousness of mercies so little improved, of blessings so ill requited.

Here is prayer, the cry of faith and love, and fear and repentance, the bubblings of the springing well—the activity of the new nature,—the expression of want—the longings for more life and light, and strength and energy—the restless desire after its own increase, and more conformity to its Divine Author.

With all this, all who are strangers to the Saviour of sinners, are practically unacquainted. But all who believe in Him, though not all in the same measure, not all in the same degree, yet do they not only

know it, but know it experimentally, know it and experience it.

My dear reader, how stands the case with *yourselves*? Do *you* know it, do *you* experience it? Whither runs the tide of supreme affection? Is it to the world, to sin, to self? What says conscience, my brother, as in the light of God's word? Does it bear an honest verdict? And is that verdict against thee? What does it pronounce, that thou art unsanctified and unholy? that hitherto all the warnings, rebukes, all the solemn witnessings of God's most sacred word have been profitless and vain? Does it remind thee of inward misgivings slighted, of awful providences set at naught? And didst thou never consider, "he that being often reprov'd, and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy?" My brother, "God commandeth all men every

where to repent," Acts xvii. 30, and therefore He commandeth *thee*. And He who commandeth repentance can alone bestow it. Thine is an awful case—rest not in it—repose not—till on thy bended knees thou seek the inestimable mercy of its only Giver.

But, perhaps, thou sayest—I have no fear as to the result—all is well. Let me suppose a case. It is, I confess, a most awful one, most fearful. Let me suppose an individual taken, in a ninstant, out of a chapel into God's immediate presence. He has heard perhaps for years. He has sat as one of the people sitteth, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. He has seemed to approve of what he heard, 32. His outward life has been blameless, his moral conduct irreproachable. And yet he has remained unregenerate, sin is unmortified within him, he is unsanctified, unholy. Imagine him drawing nigh the heavenly portal, with, per-

haps, no doubt on his soul, no misgivings, not one distrust of his safety. Listen to the dreadful word which in a moment dissipates the direful, the fatal delusion, "*I never knew you,*" Math. vii. 23. What a fearful, what a terrible sound!

Take another view of the case. Let us imagine him admitted within the blissful place, the region of perfect holiness and perfect happiness. What would the place be to him? *With whom could he find communion?* Not with the spirits of the just made perfect. He who had no real communion with saints, when upon earth, I say, no *real* communion, no oneness of heart with them in their mournings for sin, in their longings for holiness, in their sorrows, and in their joys, what communion can he have with them in heaven? *With whom could he find communion?* Not with holy angels, that do God's commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word,

Ps. ciii. 20. Their's is a region of purity in which he could not exist for a moment. *With whom could he find communion?* With God himself? Impossible! As he has no righteousness in another to meet the demands of God's Holiness, no satisfaction to offer to His Justice, so in his own soul has he no meetness, no capacity for the enjoyment of His most pure and Holy Love. Holiness is heaven below, and heaven above is but its perfection. Where then holiness is not, heaven can never be. He who is a stranger to God upon earth, cannot, even if he might, enjoy the presence of God in heaven. He who is unacquainted with a new and divine principle of inward holy life, and consequently with brokenness of heart on account of sin, tenderness of conscience, and a sincere influential desire after universal conformity to the will and image of God, has not the material of heaven within him,

and dying in that state, can never partake of its blessedness.

But I proceed in the second place, to show what encouragements the word of God gives the true believer to expect a real *growth in holiness*.

And before I adduce the proof which the scripture affords us on the subject, I would remark that even *in the world of creation*, every thing indicates a *growth*, an *advance*, a *progress*. Winter's gloom is succeeded by the cheerfulness of spring, by the warmth of summer, the fruitfulness of autumn. The insignificant acorn becomes the tender sapling, and springs up and widens into the broad majestic venerable oak. From the little blade comes forth the ear, and this yields the full grown corn in the ear. The bubbling fountain spreads itself into the streamlet, the stream, the river ; while the river flows into that boundless ocean, from which it derived its

birth. The puny child swells into the sturdy boy, the tender youth rises into the maturity of the man. All this indicates *growth, advance, progress.*

I might endeavour to prove that *the world of God's providence* leads us to the same conclusion—yea that the *very principles of sound reason* maintain as much—that if the immature thought of the child ripens into the wise and prudent judgment of the man, if the faint openings that mark the mind's early propensities, in the dawn of existence, unfold themselves more clearly, more distinctly, in the settled convictions, fixed bent and purpose of our after-life, that if men by the power of indwelling sin, a tempting satan, and an alluring world, can become habitually more and more depraved, the principle of inward depravity more and more expanding and diffusing itself through all the faculties of the soul

and habits of the life, then would it be irrational to suppose that the new nature, a thing so excellent in itself, so divine in its origin, should remain stationary in its actings. It would be irrational, I repeat, to suppose that it should not diffuse itself more and more through all the energies and faculties of the soul, and the subject of it not become habitually more humble, more abased, more tender in conscience, more upright in motive, more devoted in life, more grateful, more holy. One might contend that while pieces of art are at a stay, living healthy natures grow and thrive—that lifeless statues may indeed be motionless, but men, that have breath and animation and strength, *move* as well as live and have their being.

But I hasten to show how clear and decisive is the testimony of God's most sacred word, and how explicitly it declares that a

growth in grace is to be experienced and therefore to be expected by the child of God.

First—I would cite *the* DECLARATIONS of the word on the subject.

1 John ii. 13. “ I write unto you, *fathers*, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, *young men*, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, *little children*, because ye have known the Father.”

Prov. iv. 18. “ But the path of the just is as the shining light, that *shineth more and more* unto the perfect day.”

Job xvii. 9. “ The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be *stronger and stronger*.”

Mal. iv. 2. “ But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and *grow up* as calves of the stall.”

Mark iv. 28. “ For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself ; first, *the blade*, then *the ear*, after that the *full corn in the ear*.”

John iv. 14. “ But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water *springing up* into everlasting life.”

In the consideration of which last passage of the sacred page, how many are there, who while they have rejoiced in it as a certain proof of the final perseverance of the true saints of God, have overlooked the declaration which it also contains of the tendency of true grace to the level from which it springs, namely, God Himself—of the ascending property of the new principle, issuing in higher spirituality in our affections, and a real progress in the divine life.

Such are a few of the declarations of the word, what are its EXHORTATIONS to the same effect ?

2 Cor. vii. 1. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Eph. iv. 15. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

2 Pet iii. 18. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

In this way the Apostles press the point of a personal growth in grace upon those already converted and sanctified. They were far from lulling them to repose with the opiate that no such growth, no such advance and progress was to be expected—on the contrary, they enforce their declarations by their exhortations, and to those exhortations they add their PRAYERS.

Eph. iii. 14. "For this cause I bow

my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Phil. i. 9. "And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may

approve things that are excellent ; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

“ Col. i. 9. “ For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God ; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.”

When the apostle prays, 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13, “ and the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you ; to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God,

even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”—Is it to be supposed that he prayed for what God would not give them? Surely such hopelessness would be the very death of all prayer. But what prays he for? Not merely that they might be from time to time exhibiting more of the fruits of the Spirit—from time to time living nearer to God—but that this might be their habitual state—that they might be *established unblameable in holiness before God, and increasing in love one towards another.*

When again the same apostle prays, “and the very God of peace *sanctify you wholly*; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thess. v. 23, is this to be considered a mere expression of good will, without any real expectation of an answer to his petition? So far from this, he immediately

adds, "faithful is He that calleth you, *who also will do it*," v. 24.

He does not even encourage their hopes with the mere assertion—He *can* do it—still less does he bring before them the least doubt as to the exercise of His allowed power, by writing—He *may perhaps* be prevailed upon to do it. The words which he makes use of are positive, "He *will* do it"—nay, as if this were not encouragement enough, he adds, His very faithfulness is engaged on your behalf, "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

But what was the prayer of our Lord Himself, in John xvii. 17, "sanctify them through thy truth?" Was not this a prayer that the disciples might be *more* sanctified? Sanctified they already were—holy—regenerate—believers—but he prays that the work might be deepened, that they might receive more grace, James iv. 6, that they who had brought forth fruit thirty fold,

might yield sixty, yea an hundred fold, Mat. xiii. 23. How gloriously was this prayer answered on the day of Pentecost!

Thus we remark the clear, decisive testimony of the sacred volume. Nor is this all—we have in that volume the **EXAMPLES** of a growth in grace—a real actual advance in the ways of God—a progress in the divine life.

Regard the instance of Job. Do we not observe in him a deeper humility—a lower degree of abasement—more poverty of spirit—more self-dethroning, in other words, larger degrees of spiritual life, *after* God's fatherly discipline than *before*? If not, wherefore was all the discipline? Was all this ploughing, tilling, harrowing the earth, and breaking its hard clods to no purpose? Did the Great Husbandman spend his labour for nought? For what end are forty-two chapters written, but to unfold, at least this among other precious,

invaluable truths, that a good man needed to be more deeply humbled? That one who walked in the fear of God, and delighted in God, *above others*, Job. i. 8, needed to be taught, experimentally taught, far more than he knew, the Holy Majesty of God and the inward plague of his own heart—and that the God of love, by His most wise, soul-searching, sin-detecting, but most needful discipline, did so subdue him, so lay him low, and place him in the dust, that *in the habitual frame of his soul* he shall walk more humbly before God, all the days of his life? Surely, when we read, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore *I abhor myself* and repent in dust and ashes,” Job. xlii. 5, 6, we are not to regard it as a mere momentary effect, produced by a transient cause, but that the discovery which God had made of Himself, had, through grace, wrought a deeper

and more settled humiliation of his spirit—a more abiding view of his own utter villainess, xl. 4, more self-loathing and self-
 abhorrence. *And is not a deeper humility the truest evidence of a growth in holiness?*
 Is it not in itself a real growth?

Consider the confession of *David*, “My soul is even as a weaned child,” Ps. cxxxi. 2, as if he said, ‘I long for that, which once was my delight, no more—it attracts me no longer—I find that I can live without it—the inordinate desire of it is gone—the objects of sense and sight have been first embittered to me, and by soft and gentle degrees have been withdrawn, and now I am satisfied without them.’ But was it always so? No—by no means, “I have behaved, or subdued, and quieted myself.” Time was when I fretted my spirit, and my heart repined. Time was when I behaved myself frowardly. But Thou, Lord, hast subdued me, and I am quiet now.

“Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and forever,” as much as if he said, ‘Be followers of me, I find God a substitute for all things, while nothing is a substitute for Him.’

Compare the state of *the apostle Peter*, after, with that in which it was before, the day of Pentecost. Who must not admire the strong, the manifest change? Our Lord had said to him, converted though he was, “when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren,” Luke xxii. 32. But what a re-conversion was here! He that would have restrained the Saviour from his work of suffering, rebuking his Lord and master, saying, “Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee,” and received in consequence, the merited censure—“Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men,” Matth. xvi. 22, 23, now seems filled

with the deepest spiritual knowledge, and most holy admiration and love of His atoning sacrifice, Acts ii. 22, 23. He that had crept like a coward into the judgment hall, now stands forward in the presence of all, fearless of all consequences, 14. He whom the question of a little damsel had scared and terrified, now with his life in his hand avows his blessed Master, 32, 36. What a growth was here! The rash impetuosity, which would have sheathed his sword in the high priest's servant, had now subsided into the quiet remonstrance, "these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day," 15. That timid unbelief which first denied his Master, and then blasphemed his God, now yields to the faith that overcometh the world. In the very place, so lately a witness to the cruel martyrdom of his persecuted Lord, and in the very front of those who had dipped their hands

in His blood, he exposes his own person to all their malice, and dares to declare them His wicked murderers, Acts ii. 23, 36. Surely, while the apostle held up Him whom his soul loved, as the Son of God, the Savior of sinners, both Lord and Christ, he exhibited, perhaps, quite unconsciously to himself, another, though a far inferior object, the power of divine grace in subduing, enlightening, strengthening, warming, purifying his own heart. For whatever defects he may have afterwards exhibited in Galatia, and they were great, yet when we compare his former want of spiritual perception, his self-confidence, rashness, impetuosity, indecision and cowardice, with that character which he afterwards displayed, it must be allowed that a ripening, a maturity, an increasing conformity to the will and image of his Master are most visible and apparent.

But it may be said, this is confessedly

an *extraordinary* case. Shall I then bring before you the same truth as exhibited in the church of *Thessalonica*? “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your *faith groweth exceedingly* and the *charity* of every one of you all towards each other, *aboundeth*,” 2 Thess. i. 3. Which words not only assure us that they were kept looking to Jesus for pardon, acceptance, holiness, and heaven, but that they were in their habitual walking with God, more rooted and grounded in faith, in other words, that Christ dwelt in their hearts by faith, Eph. iii. 17, that by faith they took a firmer hold on Him, His Glorious Person, His finished work, His boundless sufficiency of grace, that they were not as children, driven to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but were fixed, established, and settled in Him, and on Him, Col. ii. 7. And after the *exceeding growth* of their

faith, we are not surprised that meek and holy charity should also grow, “And that *the charity* of every one of you all, toward each other, *aboundeth*.”

No words can more distinctly mark a growth in grace than these. An exceeding growth of faith is spoken of, and an abundance of love—nor is this all—the apostle immediately adds, “So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure,” v. 4.

But here the question will naturally arise, *as to the degree of this expected growth*, and I must allow that an obvious necessity exists for such a question. A serious evil must it ever be to form expectations unwarranted by God’s word, to be looking for an attainment, which is not within the line of a covenant of grace and mercy. That which God has never prom-

ised, God will never grant. The only basis for the prayer of faith is the word of the promise. And where prayer is without this foundation to build upon, there can be no superstructure. The suppliant therefore for unpromised mercies, is either an enthusiast, and mistakes an imagination for a reality, or labours under the pressure of ceaseless disappointment. Presumption or despondency seem the necessary adjuncts of this state of mind.

While, however, some transgress the line of the covenant, and expect *more* than God has promised, how many, how very many are there who stop far too short of that line, and seem, alas, to expect *inconceivably less*.

While sinless perfection, the eradication of the corrupt principle, a state of absolute cessation of all that is evil, are the blessings of heaven not of earth—While entire conformity to the will of God which *ought ever*

to be the desire and aim of all His children, and *will be* so, as far as faith and love prevail in them, and they are in their right minds, is a point to which they never wholly come, a summit which they never fully reach—While an apostle, who had been caught up to the third heaven, could only say, “not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” Phil. iii. 12–14—while pressing forward—reaching forth—following after, is the posture of him who is running with patience the race set before him, and entire attainment marks that race only

in its close—While a poor leper still, the holiest believer washes, and has need to wash daily, hourly, in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness—While a poor suppliant still, he cries, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Yet in the midst of all this the Scriptures broadly maintain that *much may be attained*. Were it otherwise, *pressing forward* were useless, *following after* were vain.

Through the supplies of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, as we have seen in the mortification of sin, the fleshly principle may be dethroned, crucified, subdued, and through the same gracious supplies, in the work of sanctification, the temper may become increasingly meek and gentle, the affections more filled with the love of Christ and of God, the mind may become more enlightened and spiritual, the spirit more humble, contrite, forgiving and tender, the will may be more subdued, the whole life

more Christlike. Without indulging the vain idea that the struggle with inbred corruption is to decrease, much less to cease altogether, the child of God may have, far beyond present expectation, vast increase of delight in God, and of filial communion with Him, may make large advances in a close, watchful, reverential, obedient walk—he may live more and more habitually, under the holy principles of an holy gospel, and exhibit clearer and more distinct evidence of a growing conformity to the divine image, and this may comport with his own increasing conviction of the greatest unworthiness on his part, and the deepest sense of his own sin.

My dear reader, the apostle tells us, “we have not, because we ask not,” James iv. 2, and we ask not, most certainly, when we expect not. It is indeed man’s folly to expect what God has not promised, but it is his truest wisdom to look for *all* that

He has. Deeply persuaded am I that one reason among many others, wherefore we make such low attainments in the divine life, is because our aim is so low. We have been called of God's mere grace, out of darkness into His marvellous light. We know practically so much of sin and of ourselves as sinners as to leave us without one hope but in the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of the Son of God, and He is our hope. We have fled to Him for refuge, and under His cross we shelter our defenceless heads, and there too many of us, instead of learning beneath that cross the lesson, which was taught the apostle, of reaching forth to the things before, pressing toward the mark, and following after, have it is feared, followed her example, who sought her Beloved, but sought Him upon her bed, Song iii. 1. Indolence, love of ease, a certain degree of hopelessness as to any real growth in grace,

any real progress, any real advance in the soul towards increase of conformity to the divine will, and it is to be feared, a dread of consequences, an apprehension as to what surrenders, what self-denial, what sacrifices, a farther degree of sanctification may involve, all, it may be, have tended to deaden our desire after it, and impede our progress. Archbishop Leighton remarks, ‘ If a man aim at the stars, he will cast his stone higher than if he directed his mark at some lowly shrub,’ so if our aim in the divine life be, more *where* it ought to be, our life we may humbly expect, will, through divine grace, be more *what* it ought to be.” “ Be ye followers of me,” says the apostle, “ even as I also am of Christ,” 1 Cor. xi. 1. This is our mark and this should be our aim. It is no small mercy to feel the importance of this, and still more to have our lives in lowly dependence upon the Divine blessing, stea-

dily, unweariedly bent towards its attainment.

But I proceed, in the last place, to consider *in what ways*, and *by what means*, the Spirit of holiness carries on and advances His own work of sanctification in the heart.

These ways are various. So various are they, that it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to point out one single event in life or in death by which He is not pleased in Infinite Sovereignty, but also in Infinite Wisdom and Love, to show forth His Almighty Power for its accomplishment. Most manifest it is that all the means which he employs for the mortification of sin are made use of for our increase of Sanctification, such as fervent prayer, a close and faithful reading of the word, secret meditation, occasional retirement, waiting on God in the public ordinances of His house, and a sincere and earnest de-

sire to part with all known sin and to walk in the paths of all known duty. Yet there are some distinguishing features in the character of his operations in this respect, to which I would more especially direct your attention.

In order to a farther conformity to the Divine Image, the Holy Spirit deepens the believer's EXPERIENCE.

He gives him a lower, a meaner, a juster estimate of himself than that which he formerly entertained. He opens to him still farther the polluted spring whence the polluted streams of sin steal forth, namely, the plague of his own heart, gives him deepening convictions of his own unworthiness, lowers his pride by humiliation, his fond conceits of his own wisdom by mortifying discoveries of his own folly, shows him how utterly unable he is to guide himself amidst the painful intricacies and emergencies of life, and thus takes him off

from self-glorying and self-dependence by causing him to learn that slowly comprehended truth, 'I am nothing.'

Thus does the Spirit sanctify to us the very circumstances which most deeply try. While "the Only Wise God" leads us about in his providence in order to humble us, to prove us, and show us what is in our hearts, Deut. viii. 2. His Spirit blesses to us the ever-varying events by which our pride is mortified, our weakness proved, our folly detected, hidden evils brought to light, and we are made to know that great mystery—ourselves. By degrees slow, frequently imperceptible, He discloses the Tenderness, the Wisdom, the Forbearance, and the Love of God, breaks our will, and gradually subdues it, not so much by thwarting our projects and damping our expectations, as by showing us the sinful folly and real misery of our own wilfulness,

the true wisdom and solid happiness of resting in "Thy will be done."

In this same school, *He imparts to us a clearer insight into the world's worthlessness*, unfolds, as we are able to bear it, more of the dross, the dregs, the earthiness of the perishable creature, yea, of all created good. Under His teaching, and it is only as he teaches that there can be any real profit in the lesson, we learn that the world has nothing in it to satisfy, nothing even to help us in the hour of pressing adversity, amidst the deeper sorrows of life, above all in the solemn prospect of death and eternity. We are taught the creatures inability to touch, or even to know those finer springs by which the feelings of our nature are often most sensibly moved. Yea, the very discoveries, though often so afflictive to our souls, which we make from time to time of the flaws and infirmities of even the best of God's family, are but one medium

by which the Spirit of holiness leads us, slowly, and often insensibly, from the perishable to the Imperishable, to settle down more determinately upon the One Good, and to set our affections with more fixedness of purpose "upon things above."

But above all, does the Holy Spirit make use of *His own word* in this school of heavenly science as a means to this end. By giving us closer, deeper, more personal, more filial views of Divine truth, does the Spirit of holiness in a peculiar degree, deepen the work of sanctification in the soul.

It is in this way especially that He strengthens faith, and consequently every other grace of the new nature.

Faith is the great parent grace, whence all other graces spring, the royal queen, whose train they are, declaring clearly who she is, and whence she came. Faith, as a parent, has ever her offspring with her.

As a queen, she never comes alone. As the parent is strong and vigorous, so will her offspring be. Hence the great work of the Holy Ghost is to strengthen faith, because by this he strengthens and invigorates every other grace. Where faith groweth exceedingly, there love aboundeth, 2 Thess. i. 3.

As faith is the great parent grace, so is the word faith's great nutriment. Nor is this surprising, when we consider that by the word, as in the hand of the Holy Spirit, was faith first produced, 2 Thess. ii. 14. It is no wonder, therefore, that by the same word, faith should be afterwards nourished and supported, 1 Pet. viii. 2, 1 Tim. iv. 6, 2 Pet. i. 4, Job xxiii, 12, Ps. cxix. 118.

By the word of truth, therefore, the Holy Spirit *exercises* and *strengthens* faith, keeping it in spiritual health and vigour. In this point of view, even in one single

chapter, in one single sermon, how impossible to calculate the blessed effects. Faithless as our memories too often are, in things holy and spiritual, prone to remember what it were well to forget, prone to forget what it were our happiness to remember, yet does the prayerful reading and hearing of God's holy word, bring with it, in this point of view, unnumbered blessings. *It exercises faith.* By doctrine, by precept, by promise, by example, by rebuke, by instruction, by consolation, by stirring appeal to the conscience, understanding, and affections, by a text, a sentence, a word, a thought, the Spirit of holiness draws out faith, exercises it, strengthens, and invigorates. And though sometimes the individual, through weakness of body, and confusion of mind, may be quite unable to give any distinct account of what he has read or heard, yet is his faith ever strengthened by such exercise.

But especially, as I have before remarked, does the Holy Spirit make that word a blessing, when, as the Spirit of adoption, He enables the believer, with lowly, humble, contrite confidence to say, this word is the word of Him whom I love, my Father, my Friend, and my God.

How precious and how sanctifying are the *doctrines* then ! How invigorating are the truths of God's everlasting, sovereign, unmerited love ; the strength, security, fullness, freeness, holiness, of the covenant of grace ; the true Deity, and the Incarnation of the Son of God, His life, His death, His great and perfect atonement and complete righteousness ; the purity, sanctity, perfection of his example, the blessedness, safety, sanctification, and final perseverance of all His people in faith, and love, and holiness, when in humble hope, meek but blessed confidence, the believer receives all these declarations of God's truth,

as having a personal interest in, and possession of them—when these disclosures of the very mind and heart of God are set before him as his own inheritance—when he can say, “thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart,” Jer. xvi. 16, formerly I saw these truths revealed in thy word, now I know them as truths revealed to my own soul! As the word, when so received, has a power to *comfort* which it had not before, so has it also a power to *sanctify*. It is that inward digestion of the truth which issues, and must issue, in spiritual health and vigour.

How sweet and how sanctifying are the *promises* then, when in the season of sharp trial, affliction, and anguish of heart, they are laid upon the wounded spirit, like rain upon the new mown grass. When the Spirit of love, sent by the God of love, that his heirs of promise might be parta-

kers of a divine nature, so applies them, so makes them ours, more real advance may be made in faith, and love, and holiness in that dark and lowering season, than in years before of comparative sunshine and outward ease. What cordials are these to the fainting soldier! "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee." "My strength is made perfect in weakness." "Fear not, for I am with thee—Be not dismayed, for I am thy God." "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Oh, how has it turned the battle to the gate, how have the hands which hung down been lifted up, the feeble knees been strengthened, when the Blessed Captain Himself, by His own Spirit has poured in the oil and the wine, and revived the heart of him who seemed ready to die!

How often, when sorrow after sorrow,

cross after cross, disappointment after disappointment have tried the saint of God, when the world has been unkind, friends have been unkind, saints have been unkind, and even a Father has *seemed* unkind, though it was but an appearance, has this Holy Comforter, sustaining faith, and hope, and love, brought forth the patience that hopes and quietly waits for deliverance, and even the joy that rejoices in the tribulation. Promises so applied, so possessed, give such sights of Christ and of God as cannot but transform to His Likeness, and assimilate to His Image, 2 Cor. iii. 18, vii. 1.

Then do the *precepts* appear exceedingly pleasant and gracious, and the enlarged heart runs in the way of them, Ps. cxix. 32. As love the fruit of faith is experienced, so its constraining influence is felt, its holy tendencies, its sanctifying power. Then is the timid fear of offending, and

the lowly confidence that trusts, and the quiet mind, and the peaceful waiting on God and for God, and the ready pace of swift obedience more truly known and exhibited. Then is the soul more habitually prayerful, and watchful, and spiritual, the evil within us is more subdued, the grace within more drawn out and developed, more led forth into spiritual act and exercise, and thus is the life more holy, more devoted, more Christ-like. Faith produces love. The love of God produces love to God. As Jesus is more loved, sin is more hated, and likeness to him more desired. His love to his people leads them to love what He loves, to hate what He hates. And this restrains from sin and constrains to obedience. Notions will not do it. Legal principles will not do it. Dead faith will not do it. But a living, loving, filial faith will. Close views of the cross, a realizing possession of the Saviour, endearing views

of a Father's love give a clearer vision to the spiritual eye. It can discern sin where once it had no suspicion of its existence. It can see too its blackness and deformity where they were once unseen. It can detect pride when it lurks under the guise of humility, finds itself in what seemed to be zeal, discover worldliness in that which looked like self-denial.

Under its influence, the believer shrinks from the seat of judgment upon others, because he sits there so often to judge himself, and feels too conscious of being an unprofitable servant in his own conduct, to have any desire to pass sentence upon another.

Thus, in the school of Experience, does the Spirit of holiness sanctify the soul. It is here He *exercises* and *invigorates* all the graces of the new nature, and teaches the believer to walk more nearly to, more closely with God. Amidst scenes of trial,

and temptation, and distress, and sorrow, amidst prostrate idols, broken cisterns, and withered gourds, amidst a sinking self, and a dying world ; by the faithful word, the word of God, the word of a Father, its doctrines, its promises, its precepts, does the Spirit of holiness sanctify the elect of God. Here does He strengthen faith, encourage hope, and deepen repentance.—Here does He foil Satan, detach from sin, and wean from the world.—Here does He lead to submission, humiliation, brokenness and prayer. It is here that He wounds and He heals.—He occasions tears and dries them up again. It is here that he kills and makes alive.—He satisfies the hungry, but sends the rich empty away. Here the lofty mountain is brought down, the lowly valley rises—the creature is laid in the dust, and God alone is exalted. It is here He shows the believer in Jesus that religion is no cunningly devised

fable, not a chain of opinions, not the accuracy of a creed, but the real substantial possession of that which has strength to support, wisdom to guide, true riches in the land of poverty, real comfort when all earthly comfort fails. In the dry and parched wilderness we discover more preciousness in the fountain of life, and the very parchedness of the desert endears that fountain still more to our souls.

But the Holy Spirit also promotes a growth in grace by leading the believer to live more habitually in the region of a closer SELF-EXAMINATION.

Under His illumination, the saint of God, from a deep conviction of its indispensable necessity, turns over the page of conscience more fairly and more frequently, learns to commune more with his own heart, upon his bed, and be still, and this, that he may stand in awe and sin not, Ps. iv. 4.

My readers,—Religion with some is but a light matter. Walking closely with God, they talk of and think of as an easy thing. But so thinks not the child of God—so speaks not the word of God, “straight is the gate and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life.” *Mat. vii. 14.* Though its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace, yet are they beset on all sides by enemies strong and mighty. “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force”—and this they, who walk in these ways, know. A vain ensnaring world without, and a traitor within, and he who can sometimes be a cunning viper, a roaring lion, and an angel of light, will soon give clear and decisive evidence that the word of God is true. With the temptation of legality on the one hand, and carnality on the other—carelessness on the right, and slavish dread on the left, the fear of man, and the

love of man, too much confidence in ourselves, too little confidence in God, we soon discover the way to heaven is not very broad, and that it is no light thing to be "in the fear of God all the day long." During that day, in which we walk the nearest to God, many a time do we slip in our path. The most watchful of God's children feel this—feel it *the most*. Pride soon steps in and defiles our holiest things. Our lips need a continual guard, Ps. cxli. 3, above all, our hearts, Prov. iv. 23. And notwithstanding all, in many things we still offend. And when we grow careless and unwatchful, many a rebuke must we expect. Many a kind and gentle remonstrance will be sent to us by Him who loves us. It is here the Spirit of Holiness leads us to judge ourselves, that we be not judged of the Lord, 1 Cor. xi. 31, Lev. xxvi. 40, 42. It is not to the court of Justice we are summoned—it is not to

stand at the tribunal of God's violated law. For ever blessed be His Name, through the perfect and complete satisfaction given to that justice by the finished work of Him who is God in our nature, that law, as to all its pain and penalty, is for ever silenced. "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," "all that believe are justified from all things," Rom. viii. 1 Acts xiii. 39. No, it is to the court of Conscience He leads us. By diligent, close, faithful self examination, self judging, self rebuke, self condemnation, He keeps the heart honest, upright and tender, Acts xxiv. 16. Under His gentle hand we do not run from the rebuke to the cross, but we take the rebuke thither. There, as we stand, viewing Him by faith whom this very sin pierced, the Holy Spirit deepens His own work in the heart, unfolding to us the exceeding evils seen in

the stupendous expiation, reproving us for it, yea, causing us to reprove ourselves, leaving us without one excuse, Ezek. xvi. 63. Thus does He teach, humble, purify, sanctify. Especially so, when, as we stand beneath that cross, abashed, abased, penitent, humbled, and self humbled, He sprinkles afresh on our conscience that precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin, and cheers us with a renewed sense of sins forgiven, Prov. xxviii. 13, 1 John i. 9.

Nor let it be forgotten that in the very paths of OBEDIENCE itself, the Spirit of Holiness more deeply sanctifies—that, as where there is no real, sincere, upright obedience, there is no real sanctification, so, in proportion as we conscientiously obey, the Spirit deepens His work in the soul. This mode of reasoning may seem inaccurate, a sort of reasoning in a circle, as if we made holiness the effect of obedience, as well as its cause. But, however

paradoxical it may appear, yet is it most true.—“Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in Thy ways.” “They that have clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.” “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.” Nor is it at all difficult to ascertain the reason of this. The more close and filial our walk with God, the more distinct and clear will be our view of God, for in the ways of obedience God meets with His child, and encourages His child—the more God is truly seen and known, the more will He be loved, served, and obeyed, and His service delighted in—this leads to closer discoveries of God, and to a greater delight in Him.

Besides this, the very exercise of those graces of the new nature which are called forth in patient endurance, and active obedience, in resistance of that which is

evil, or in reaching forth to that which is good, in love to God and love to man, in the service of the church, and communicating benefits to the world, is in itself a means of health and strength, and vigour to the soul. It is agreeable to the will of God, in accordance with the word of God, and, therefore, has the blessing of God.

The length of this discussion allows me time only for a few words of solemn caution—I shall then conclude the whole.

Beware, my readers, beware how any of you deny the principle of a growth in grace. Of all errors in opinion, into which a child of God may fall, it would be difficult to point out one, more dangerous in its essential character, more injurious in its direct tendencies than is involved in such a denial. They who hold it, notwithstanding every profession to the contrary, can have but a feeble perception of the purifying, sanctifying properties of the new nature.

Such an opinion indirectly maintains a degree of omnipotency in sin, denies that the gracious principle, in the heart of the believer, is the ruling, reigning, controlling, overcoming principle. It dishonours the sceptre of Immanuel's grace in the heart, loses sight of one great end of His death, and greatly undervalues the power of the Holy Ghost. It has a tendency to carnal ease and lethargy, to a making excuse for sin, and a settling down in present attainments. It may allow the indispensable necessity of holiness, the importance of good works as an evidence of faith—It may be even very urgent on these topics, yet denying a growth in sanctification, it administers, however undesignedly, an opiate to the conscience, and the effect will be, unless under the power of some momentary stimulant—the spirit of slumber.

Beware, if you allow the principle, lest

you also hold some noxious opinion, which may neutralize and destroy all its beneficial effects. You may, for instance, entertain some wrong notions as to the immutability of God, and because He not only *does not* but *cannot* change, you may lose sight of the complacency which an holy God cannot but take in all approximation to His own purity, in the view of His Sovereign love may not sufficiently discern His holy love, or, His essential love of all holiness. You may call the want of enjoyment a state of legal bondage, and not see it to be the merciful chastisement of a tender Father for some slighting neglect of his gentle rebukes. You may attribute that to Satan and his suggestions, which may be nothing but the uneasiness of honest conscience, bearing upright testimony against your departures from the ways of God. You may make an unholy allowance for circum-

stances, and imagine *your* case to be the exception to a general rule of a progress in Sanctification. You may form unscriptural views of the sovereignty of the divine will, and secretly say, ‘it may not be the will of God that *I* should be more holy,’ though His revealed will, as seen in His word, and *this is your only guide*, is, “be ye holy, *in all manner of conversation*, be ye holy for I am holy,” 1 Pet. i. 15, 16—forgetting too that if you thrive not in grace and holiness, if you go not from strength to strength, it is ordinarily from sinful negligence, love of the world and indulgence of sin. You may repose in a mere conviction of safety, turn it into an occasion of inactivity instead of aspiring after all that God has promised. You may indolently recline upon the invincible operation of the Holy Spirit, forgetting that his mode of administering His own bless-

ings is in the diligent prayerful use of all the means which He has Himself appointed.

Beware of holding any practice which militates against such a principle, any allowed commission of that which you know to be evil, any allowed omission of that which you know to be right. If this be not regarded, you may admit in theory a growth in grace, but can never practically realize it. Many complain of their want of growth, and they have reason. *They do not grow*—and the cause is here. They forget “laying aside every weight,” as an indispensable requisite for running this race set before us, Heb. xii. 1, 1 Pet. ii. 1. We must put off the old man, before we can put on the new, Eph. iv. 22, 24.

Lastly—*Beware of being satisfied without the real possession of the inestimable blessing.* Am I wrong in calling that inesti-

mable, which involves in it a closer walk with God Himself, higher communion with God, and a higher enjoyment of God? Am I wrong in calling that *a blessing*, which has in it the material of future glory, and gives the soul of a foretaste of what shall be, even in heaven itself? If holiness be happiness, happiness in its essential qualities, happiness in its certain effects, then increase of holiness is necessarily increase of happiness.

Who can adequately set forth the vast accession of real, solid, substantial peace, connected with, or rather arising from more spiritual light in the understanding,—more purity in the conscience—more subduedness in the will—a more holy current in the affections—a more devoted—a more consecrated life?

Holiness is happiness. This is the will of God, He has ordained that it should be

so, How indeed could it be otherwise? It is not only His will, it is His nature.

Seek then, oh seek the inestimable mercy. Stop not short of the promised blessing. Rest not in mere desires. Be not as the sluggard that desireth and hath nothing. See all sanctification in Christ and there seek it—not only see it in Him, but seek it from Him. He has it to bestow, yea in order to bestow. Seek it then in the spirit of dependence. Remember that a branch, and such thou art, stands not on its own root, but hangs upon the stem. Jesus is thy stem, thy root, thy all.

Seek the blessing *uprightly, unreservedly*. Thou canst not be upright in thy seeking after any real growth in grace, unless thou art unreserved in seeking after *all* growth. Reserves here are an axe at the root. Seek to grow *inwardly* into Christ

in all things, Eph. ii. 17, iv. 15, *outwardly*, in good works, before the world, i. 9, 10, 11, *downwards*, in a deeper humility, 1 Pet. v. 5, 6, *upwards*, in all holy conversation and Godliness, 1 Pet i. 15.

Seek it *obediently*, in the use of all means, and in simplicity of walk before God. The Lord is found in His own paths, Gen. xxiv. 27.

Seek it *unweariedly*. The thing is worthy for which thou seekest, Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5. The Lord withholds, that thou mayest value it the more, when he gives it. Faint not, tire not : men ought not only to pray, but to pray *always* and not to faint, Luke xviii. 1.

Seek it *in faith*, relying upon his faithfulness, who also will do it, 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

Seek it *in hope*. Thy very prayers for it—thy very desires after it should be in

themselves vast encouragement: they show the working of the Spirit within thee. The tendencies of thine heart are an index of His work in thine heart.

Thou asked perhaps, am *I* growing in grace? *I* that discover so much evil within me, painfully, increasingly discover it? Remember, a deeper consciousness of indwelling sin, when that sin is not only not indulged, but really opposed, is by no means a proof of thy not growing in grace. Frequently it is a proof of a deeper acquaintance with the true plague of thine own heart, and this is in itself a growth. Sins must be detected before they can be mortified, their true nature must be seen, before they can be hated. True growth is not always perceptible by the subject of such growth. The Spirit will not always reveal it to him, lest the sight be injurious, but rather directs his eye to the cross of

Christ, and to the grace of Christ, that under the influence of the sun of righteousness, he may grow still more, Mal. iv. 2. Forget not that it is the nature of spiritual growth for the most part to be slow and gradual. It is so in nature, Mark iv. 27—it is so in grace. We do not see the blade grow, but we mark it when it is grown.

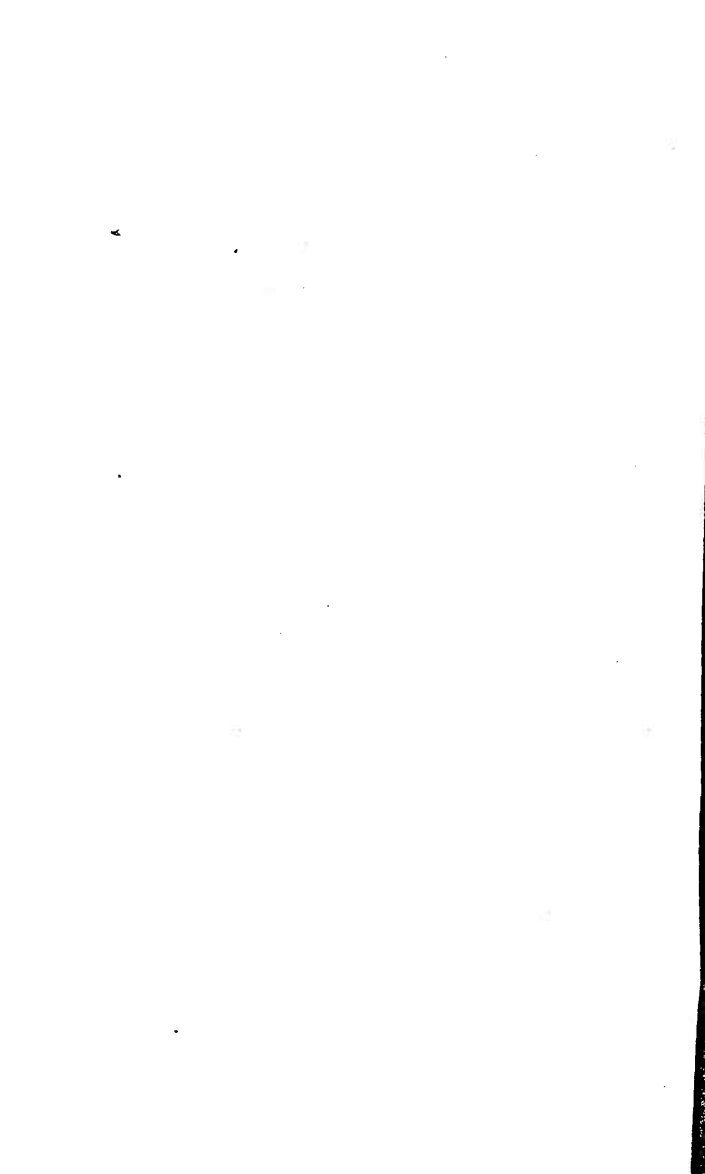
Besides this, the All Wise God, as He once drew up thine affections in much warmth of emotion, and liveliness of feeling, so now is He strengthening the root and deepening His work in thine heart. When the storm shakes the tree to its roots, and causes every branch to tremble and vibrate, yet if the effect be that it takes a firmer hold of the earth than before, however shaken, it is a stronger tree. So, if in the midst of all thy temptations, afflictions, conflicts, thy spirit takes firmer hold on Christ than formerly, thou art growing

still, growing in simple faith, self abasement, poverty of spirit, and humility of heart.

Seek then the blessing, I repeat *hopefully*. Thy ground of confidence, in this as in all other expectations, is not *thyself*, but the *promise*.

Above all, *seek it as a child*. Go to thy Father as thy Father in Christ, and tell him all the secrets of thine heart. Tell him what poor advances thou hast made, thy slow, thy little progress, if progress at all thou canst venture to call it, tell Him what is the very desire of thy soul, that all sin may be mortified, and all promised sanctification enjoyed. As one pardoned, accepted, justified, having already received so much, and such is thy case, though thou mayest be the weakest and feeblest that ever found sin to be hateful and Christ to be precious, go, and ask this mercy, this vast mercy, at His hands.

Will it not encourage thee to remember that the very earnest desire after it is but the breathing of His Spirit within thee—that thou hast to further thy cause, an Advocate at His right hand, His own beloved Son—and that the thing for which thou seekest is most pleasing to thy Father Himself?



BOOKS

PUBLISHED AND FOR SALE BY

JOHN S. TAYLOR,

Theological and Sunday School

Bookseller,

BRICK CHURCH CHAPEL,

CORNER OF PARK-ROW AND NASSAU-ST.,

OPPOSITE THE CITY-HALL, NEW-YORK.

SELECT REMAINS OF THE LATE WM. NEVINS, D. D. with a Memoir.

From the New-York Weekly Messenger.

“The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.” They erect for themselves a monument, enduring as the throne of God, imperishable as the crown of glory which bedecks the brow of him who is Lord of all. These lights of the world are never extinguished; but while their mortal remains are mouldering in the tomb, the recollection of their graces enkindles in those who remain, a flame of holy emulation and zeal. Such is, and will be the case, with respect to the lamented divine whose honored name stands at the head of this notice. Dr. Nevins was a man of eminent piety and great talent, and though

he requested that no extended memoir of him might be attempted, yet it was never likely but that some account of him should be written and published. This has been done, and the usefulness of the work before us cannot fail to be co-extensive with its circulation. The prominent features of Dr. Nevins's character are worthy of universal imitation. His talents and acquirements were superior, his piety sincere, and his wisdom practical. Humility and amiability, diligence and punctuality, were traits acknowledged by all who knew him. He was a powerful writer, and those productions of his pen which appear in this volume as "Select Remains," are "as apples of gold in pictures of silver"—"words fitly spoken." In addition to all the excellencies with which this volume abounds, we are happy to mention the neatness and beauty of its typography, the whiteness of the paper, and the exquisite delicacy of the beautiful likeness of Dr. Nevins with which the book is embellished. We shall cease to mention London books as standards of taste and elegance, if such volumes as this are presented to us from a New-York press and bindery. We recommend this work to universal attention.

From the New-York Observer.

This valuable work has just been published by Mr. John S. Taylor, corner of Park-row and Nassau-street. It is a handsome octavo of 398 pages, containing a portrait engraved on steel. About 80 pages are occupied with a biographical notice of Dr. Nevins and extracts from his diary. From 1830 to 1835, they are given in an unbroken series. We have seldom read a diary with

deeper interest. It becomes richer and richer in heavenly thoughts, as the author drew near the end of his earthly labors. The book consists chiefly of selections from his unpublished writings, which are replete with the purest and most exalted sentiments, expressed with simplicity, conciseness, and point. To all who have read Mr. Nevins' Essays in the New-York Observer, over the signature of M. S. it is needless to remark upon the excellence and peculiar charm of his writings, which combine sententiousness and pungency with deep and living piety. The work may be recommended as useful in forming, strengthening, and maturing the Christian graces.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE, designed for the Young, by WM. C. BROWNLEE, D. D.

Those who have been accustomed to view the learned author of this work clad in his coat of mail, the armour of gospel truth, and thus accoutred, contending earnestly, valiently, and successfully; for the purity of the Christian faith, in opposition to the crude and unscriptural dogmas of the Romish hierarchy, will rejoice to find him, in imitation of his illustrious prototype Luther, for a while reposing on his hilt, and addressing himself to the exposition of the first principles of the Christian religion, with a view to the spiritual edification of our youth, in a manner the most instructive and fascinating. We rejoice in the publication of this work, and our joy arises from the belief, that, with the blessing of God, it will prove a powerful antidote to many of those deleterious

rious principles with which the hollow faith of infidelity would seek to poison the minds of the generation now springing into manhood. Let every Christian parent put a copy of it, accompanied by his prayers, in the hands of his child. Its external appearance fully sustains the well-earned reputation of its tasty publisher, Mr. John S. Taylor, Park-Row, New-York.

O. W.

J. S. T. has also a large and choice selection of Miscellaneous works, suitable for Sunday School Libraries; together with Theological, Classical, Moral, and Religious Books, Stationary, &c. all of which he will sell at the lowest prices.

A constant supply of the Publications of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, the American Sunday School Union, and of the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, at the same prices as sold at their respective Depositories.

N. B. Orders from the country will be immediately attended to, and books forwarded according to directions. Should the selection of books for Sunday Schools be left with J. S. T., and he should forward any which should not suit the purchaser, they may be returned, and the money will be refunded, or other books given in exchange. Those wishing to purchase, are invited to call and examine for themselves.



BT

767

.E9

Evans, J.H.

The spirit of holiness

58321

B

58321



